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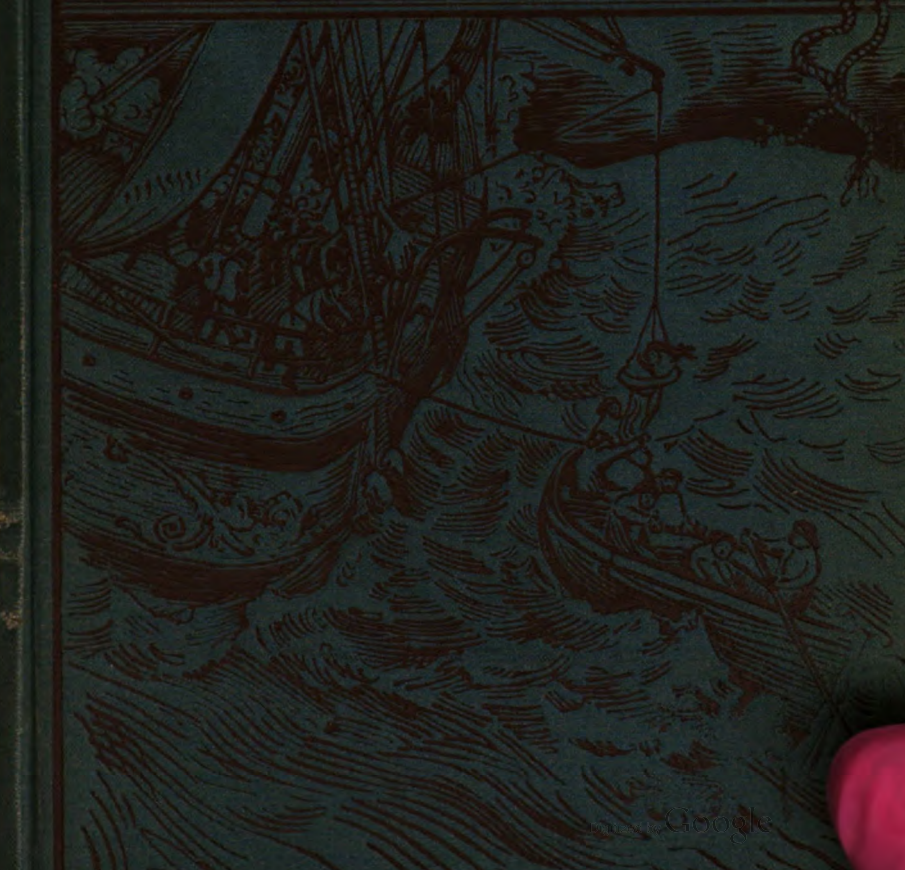

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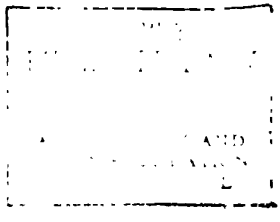

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MARTIN THE SKIPPER

A TALE

FOR BOYS AND SEAFARING FOLK

BY

JAMES F. COBB, F.R.G.S.

AUTHOR OF "THE WATCHERS ON THE LONGSHIPS," "SILENT JIM," ETC.

"So close is ~~glory~~ to our dust,
So near is God to man;
When duty whispers loud, 'Thou must!'
The youth replies, 'I can.'"

EMERSON.

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"But ah! there is the lifeboat not far off, a conspicuous object borne on the top of a wave which is rushing onward to bury him in its cold embrace." — Page 223.

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PREFACE TO AMERICAN EDITION.

As in the previous very popular and powerful religious tale which we republished from the pen of this author ("Watchers on the Longships"), it will be readily seen that this volume, also, is written by a member of the Church of England. Very naturally there is constant allusion to the forms and offices of that Church. There is, however, no sentiment expressed that will grate harshly upon the religious convictions of any evangelical Christian, and the story is so eminently wholesome in its moral and religious lessons,— it illustrates so happily the power of grace in the peculiar temptations of the sea, and under the most trying circumstances, and is told in such an effective style, — that it will be heartily welcomed in all Christian denominations, and will accomplish a good service wherever it is circulated.

It is grateful to add, that the author is much interested in this American edition of his work, and that it goes forth under the sanction of his approval.

AMERICAN PUBLISHERS.

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MARTIN THE SKIPPER.

CHAPTER I.

TWO LADS.

"It was about the lovely close of a bright summer day,
There came a gallant merchant-ship full sail to Plymouth Bay."
— MACAULAY.

THERE is, perhaps, no spot in England which so thoroughly combines natural beauty and historical interest as Plymouth Hoe. The prospect it commands is unrivalled. Every variety of scenery meets the eye; the blue ocean sparkling in the sunshine, dotted with sails of all sizes, from the gigantic iron-clad to the tiny fishing-smack, stretches away far as the eye can reach to the southern and western horizon. On the right and left, hills of the most picturesque form, clothed with woods down to the water's edge, many of them crowned with forts and battlements, extend into the sea, thus forming that magnificent natural harbor which modern engineering skill has made perfect by the construction of the renowned breakwater which lies at its entrance, a long, low line, marked by the broad belt of surf, caused by the constant dashing of the waves against its granite wall, by the dark fort in its centre, and by the graceful lighthouse at its western extremity. Nearer to the spectator, on the right, rises Drake's Island, with its quaint old castle and fortifications, its rocky sides covered with green; behind, and separated from it by a broad chan-

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nel of blue sea, may be seen the magnificent park of Mount Edgecombe, a mass of verdure, soft greensward, and luxurious foliage of every hue, beyond which again the coast-line still continues diversified by gray rocks, red quarry sides, villages nestling in leafy nooks, and washed by the waves till it terminates in the lofty point of Penlee, with its tower and telegraph signal. If we turn in the other direction toward the north and east, our glance ranges over the thickly-peopled, crowded buildings of the three towns, above which, here and there, the spires and towers of churches and public buildings — notably of the grand new Guildhall — loom as conspicuous objects, while the hills of Dartmoor form the dark rugged background to the imposing picture. The gray walls of the citadel, with its battlements, ramparts, portcullis, and drawbridge, suggestive of the battles and sieges of former days, bound the view from the Hoe to the immediate east, while beyond it, towards the south, a long range of green hills, here and there dotted with barracks and battlements, terminates at some distance beyond the breakwater in the fortress-crowned height of Mount Batten.

This unrivalled public ground is associated with numberless interesting events in English history. Hither in all ages have our naval heroes met together to look out for those foreign foes whom they have ever succeeded in sweeping from the seas; here have they planned their most famous enterprises and expeditions, and here were the great captains of the Elizabethan era assembled, playing at bowls, when the first sail of the mighty Spanish Armada was discerned, which, by their skill and valor, aided by Heaven-sent tempests, was scattered over the seas, or dashed to fragments against the rocky shores of old England.

The Hoe is always a busy, lively scene, rarely deserted, and frequently crowded. Varied groups are studded over the ground. At one end soldiers are being drilled, while

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boys are playing at cricket in the adjoining field, gay parties of idlers are sauntering up and down, listening perhaps to the strains of a military band, which plays here on certain days, and sailors with telescopes, eagerly on the lookout for expected vessels, are at all hours to be found standing at those points which command the widest view over the Sound and Channel.

It was a bright spring morning. There was not a cloud in the sky, while a gentle breeze just ruffled the surface of the sparkling sea, whose vast expanse was everywhere dotted with the sails of various craft of all sizes and rigs, some making for the port, others taking advantage of a fair wind to start on their voyages.

Over the parapet, close to the Camera obscura, a boy of about fifteen was leaning, and gazing eagerly over the blue waters of the Sound, as if he expected every moment to discern on the horizon the sail of some well-known and wished-for vessel.

It was for the ship of which his father was captain that the lad was on the lookout. The "Diana" had been due for the last two days now, but with the contrary winds which had prevailed, that was not to be wondered at. But to-day surely she would arrive, thought Martin Archer, as he strained his eyes in the direction where he hoped to recognize her.

The boy was especially anxious for his father's arrival from this voyage — not that his return was not always eagerly welcomed by him — but next voyage his father had promised that, with the ship-owner's consent, he would take Martin with him as an apprentice; then the one great object of all his boyish hopes would be attained.

Stephen Archer, a native of Plymouth, had passed the greater part of his life at sea. At ten years old he had started on his first voyage as cabin-boy in a collier; being steady, strong, and active, he had quickly risen through the different grades of his profession, till he was finally in-

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trusted with the charge of a small vessel, in which he made several voyages. So satisfied were his employers with the young skipper that they gave him the command of a large brigantine. In this he had sailed several times to the Mediterranean, and once as far as the West Indies. The voyage from which his son was now expecting him to return had only been as far as Lisbon and Gibraltar, to which he had taken a cargo of coals, and was bringing back fruit and other southern produce.

Stephen Archer had married after he returned from his first voyage as captain, when he was about twenty-two years of age. His wife was the daughter of a next-door neighbor. Stephen had known Ruth Symons from childhood; she was two years his junior. It had always been expected that they would make a match. They were not only a handsome but a happy young couple, though Stephen's constant voyages, resulting in such frequent and long absences, were trying to Ruth at first, who often felt sad and lonely, and anxious too, when she heard the winds howling, and saw the huge billows rolling up the Sound and dashing against the breakwater.

While Stephen was on his second voyage after their marriage, their eldest son, Martin, was born. A fortnight after the skipper returned. Great indeed was his joy when Ruth welcomed him home with the infant in her arms.

Such a steady and industrious pair as Captain Archer and his wife could not fail to prosper. Stephen had always saved his money; and now as a skipper he was in receipt of very good pay. Ruth, too, made something by her needle. From the narrow confined street in which they had hitherto lived, they removed to a small house in a better part of the town, and here three more children were born to them, another boy and two girls. Thus six happy years passed away. The joy with which Stephen and Ruth met after his voyages compensated them for the bitterness of their frequent partings and long separations. The chil-

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dren were strong and healthy. Martin was growing up to be the image of his father. He already went to the day and Sunday school. The good clergyman of the parish in which they lived took a great interest in the boy for his parents' sake as well as for his own. He had known Captain Archer and his wife for the greater part of their lives. It was he who had married them. He was a regular visitor at their house. Whenever the captain was in Plymouth his place in church twice on Sundays was never vacant. He and his wife were regular communicants too, and Mr. Newberry regarded them as among the most promising members of his flock. But this bright sunshine of almost uninterrupted happiness was not to last. Dark and gloomy days were at hand for the little family circle. Early in July Stephen Archer had sailed to the Mediterranean. He had left his wife and family in perfect health, but not long after his departure a terrible visitor appeared in Plymouth; that fatal disease, the cholera, which had already ravaged London and other English cities, now declared itself unmistakably among the crowded and unwholesome dwellings of the lower orders in Plymouth and Devonport, and rapidly spread among all classes of the population. The mortality was appalling, the merciless pestilence spared neither poor nor rich; it hewed down both the young and the old; the infant in the cradle and the strong man at his daily work alike fell victims before the destroying angel. In the parish where the Archers lived, the cholera made terrible havoc; there was scarcely a house in which there was not one dead. Mr. Newberry and his fellow-workers were untiring in the zeal with which they labored among their plague-stricken flock. Day, night, and at all hours were they summoned to be present at the beds of the dying, and they were ever ready and willing to go. Worn out and exhausted by such arduous work, sick at heart at the scenes they had to witness, grieved and cast down at the defiance and blasphemy with which many hardened sinners met the

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last enemy, and entered unprepared into the presence of the Almighty; saddened at the loss of many whom they loved and respected, and overwhelmed by the numbers of orphans and destitute persons to be provided for, it was not to wondered at that two of the clergy succumbed themselves to the disease.

When the fatal epidemic was at its height, Ruth Archer's youngest child was stricken down with it, and in the course of a few hours breathed its last in its mother's arms. The next day the two other children were taken ill; poor Ruth, overwhelmed with grief, never left their bedside. Stephen's mother had come to help her in her trouble, and it was well indeed that she had some assistance, for the following day, after witnessing the death of her second son, she was herself attacked by the disease. Worn out and exhausted as she was, as well as overcome by grief at the loss of her two children, she was utterly unable to resist the attack, and in a few hours fell an easy victim to the pestilence.

Mr. Newberry, hastily summoned to the Archer's house, arrived just in time to receive her farewell messages. A terrible trial it was to the affectionate wife and mother that she must leave her husband, her children, and all she held dear on earth. Hard indeed was it in such a case to submit without repining to the will of the Almighty; and the thought of Stephen returning from his voyage in a few weeks hence, to find his home desolate, his wife and perhaps all his children reposing beneath the cold sod of the cemetery, was by far the bitterest element in her cup of sorrow. For herself she was perfectly resigned, she was not afraid to die, she was ready and willing to depart and be with Jesus.

The morning following the day on which his mother died, her third child succumbed to the fatal malady. Martin alone survived, — the only member of the hitherto unbroken little family circle; he as yet had escaped the sickness, and now his grandmother sent the heart-broken

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boy away to his aunt, who lived in a village among the Dartmoor hills, that he might escape the infection.

Among all the sad cases of distress and bereavement which, during that terrible time, came under Mr. Newberry's notice, none weighed so heavily upon his heart as that of poor Captain Archer. With what suddenness would the fearful blow fall upon him! There was no means of preparing him for the crushing calamity which would meet him on his arrival at Plymouth, for Mr. Newberry was aware that he had already sailed from his last port of call, and could not be communicated with, either by post or telegraph. Within the next fortnight he would return to find his only remaining child motherless and himself a widower. The clergyman dreaded the effect which such a shock might have on the poor man, and it was his constant prayer that strength might be granted him to bear it.

About ten days after Ruth Archer's funeral the brigantine of which her husband was master anchored in the Sound. Mr. Newberry had strictly enjoined the owners of the vessel, as well as the men on the lookout, to give him the earliest information of her arrival, that he might be the first to break the sad tidings to her bereaved captain. They did so, and the clergyman was among the first to spring on board. His unlooked-for presence, as well as his sad countenance, told Archer at once that something was wrong. Rumors of an outbreak of cholera at Plymouth had reached him during his voyage and made him anxious about his wife and children. "What is the matter, sir?" he exclaimed eagerly as he grasped Mr. Newberry's hand. "Is Ruth ill, or the children, or ——; but why have you taken the trouble to come out and meet me at this early hour?" It was some moments before the clergyman could reply. Alas! that he should have to be the bearer of such evil tidings.

"Come down into the cabin with me, Stephen," he said;

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and when they were within and had shut the door, gradually and as gently as he could he broke to him the fatal news. So great and so sudden was the shock that the unhappy man seemed as if he could scarcely realize it at first. Then Mr. Newberry knelt down and prayed, imploring Him who was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and whose love and sympathy is infinite, to pour some balm of comfort into that wounded heart. When they came on deck again all noticed the sad change which had come over the captain's face. The crew meanwhile had heard what had occurred. Leaving the ship in charge of the mate, Captain Archer accompanied Mr. Newberry on shore. He took him with him to his own home, for, as Martin was still absent, he could not bear the thought of the poor fellow being left solitary and alone, in that home which had before been so happy and cheerful.

The strong man was utterly heart-broken; all his domestic happiness had vanished like a dream. There seemed nothing for him to look forward to, as far as this world was concerned, but a dreary and desolate future. But he was a man of simple faith and prayer. He never lost his confidence and trust in that Father above, who seeth not as we see, and maketh all things work together for good, however hard they may seem, to those who love Him. He tried to look beyond the clouds of this world, to the everlasting sunshine of the world above, and to think more of the blissful reunion with the dear ones who had gone thither before him, than of the bitterness of the separation which he had been called upon to endure. Martin too had been spared him; he thanked God for that mercy. How terrible it would have been had he too been taken! He went to Dartmoor to see the boy, and stayed a few days there with his sister, Martin required comforting as much as his father, for the poor little fellow could not at all get over the death of his mother, his brother, and sisters, and scarcely a night had passed since he left Ply-

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mouth that he had not cried himself asleep. It was a great joy to him to see his father once more; father and son now mutually cheered each other.

When the cholera had abated Captain Archer and his son returned to Plymouth. He gave up the house in which the happiest years of his life had been spent, and took a lodging, which his mother shared with him, she undertaking to care for Martin while his father was absent on his voyages. With the elasticity and lightheartedness of childhood, the boy soon began to forget his sorrows. He went regularly to school, where he was a general favorite with both master and scholars. Before sailing again his father earnestly commended him to the care of Mr. Newberry, who promised to look as well after the boy as if he were his own; and as he was regarded by his grandmother as her special treasure, Captain Archer felt that his son was in good keeping, as far as earthly care was concerned, and, fervently praying God to watch over and protect him during the few months which his voyage would last, with a heavy heart he bade farewell to the little lad, and sailed to the Levant.

As Martin's childhood passed away he grew up strong and active. He was an apt scholar too, won many prizes from his masters, who were generally ready to commend his good conduct and steadiness. Now and then led astray by wild companions, he had been involved in scrapes and difficulties, for which he was always deeply penitent. He regularly attended the Sunday-school, where he gave great satisfaction to his teachers. Martin's happiest time was when his father came home from his voyages, and spent a few weeks with him. He liked to hear of all his adventures in foreign lands, of the storms to which he had been exposed, the dangers which he had passed through, — all these the boy longed to share, all his hopes and desires were turned on the sea; he looked earnestly forward to the day when his father's promise should be fulfilled, and

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when for the first time he should sail with him over those dark-blue waves upon which his gaze was so often fixed. And now the wished-for time had come at last. To-day, or to-morrow, at latest, his father would arrive, and in a few weeks, when he sailed on his next voyage, it was quite decided that Martin should go with him. For the last year he had been sent to a good commercial school, where he had studied hard at navigation in all its branches, and at whatever was thought to be useful for a sailor's career. He had read the lives of the great Devon maritime heroes, who, in all ages of English history, had sailed from that shore on which he was now standing, and had made themselves famous and their names immortal by their grand enterprises, bold exploits, and brave deeds. He would be famous too, he had made up his mind to that; he would devote himself zealously to his profession, and ere long he would be a skipper like his father; and with a vessel at his command, and a crew under him to obey his orders, he would bear his country's produce to the furthest zones, and become the boldest and most successful captain of all who sailed from Plymouth Sound.

While thus meditating as he leaned over the parapet, he felt a friendly clap on the shoulder, and turning round recognized an acquaintance.

"I thought I'd find you here, Martin," were the words which greeted his ears. They proceeded from a boy about his own age, whose whole manner and appearance formed a striking contrast to Martin's. This lad was short and thick-set, with dark hair, black eyes, and a low forehead; his clothes were torn and ragged, his face and hands dirty, his boots were full of holes, on his head he wore a dilapidated straw hat which was rapidly falling to pieces; while Martin, on the other hand, who was tall, fair, and with bright blue eyes, was neatly dressed, clean and tidy in his person — in fact, looking quite like a gentleman in comparison to his companion.

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"Yes, I am here, Dan, as you might expect, to-day; what do you want with me?" "Well! just lend me a sixpence, will you, Martin; I've had no breakfast this morning, and I 'm terrible hungry, I can assure you." This was the reply which Martin had expected from Dan M'Carthy, a lazy, idle fellow, a constant truant from school when he was sent there, and who, since he had left it, would rarely work; and if by doing odd jobs he did now and then earn a few pence, spent them at once at the sweet-shops and orange-stalls. Dan was always borrowing money of any one who was weak enough to lend it, and lending with him meant, as it does generally in such cases, giving, and without the gratitude which a gift entails. Martin, who was a good-natured fellow, had frequently lent him money and suffered in consequence. Dan and he had known each other from childhood, for they had lived in the same street and been constant playmates, different as they were in their habits and dispositions. Dan's father was an Irishman, a good-for-nothing, easy-going fellow, who had come to settle in Plymouth some twenty years before, and in course of time, much to the grief of her parents, had won the heart of a quiet, respectable girl of Stonehouse. In spite of every warning she persisted in marrying the gay, attractive young Irishman, who, having obtained a situation as dockyard laborer, had promised to work and lead a steady life. Those who knew him best had little faith in his vows of amendment. Before they had been married six months he was dismissed from the dockyard for his idleness and irregular attendance, and contented himself with doing odd jobs that came in his way. He soon took to drinking habits, and his poor wife, who was now convinced, when it was too late, of the mistake she had made in marrying Patrick, had to support herself as well as she could by needlework and washing. Within two years after their marriage, two children, a boy and a girl, were born to the M'Carthys, — the elder, the

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boy Dan, who seemed to take after his father in every way; the younger, Kate, who, in disposition as well as in features, was the image of her mother.

Living in the same street as the Archers, the families were on intimate terms. Mrs. Archer had known Jane M'Carthy before her marriage, which the former had always regretted, and when trouble came upon poor Jane, and she had hard work to support herself and her two children, her old friend was always ready to give her all the assistance in her power. Captain Archer, too, would often talk seriously to Patrick, urge him to forsake his idle ways, to work steadily at any employment which might offer itself, and to shun drink and the public-house; but though now and then Pat would appear deeply penitent and promise to turn over a new leaf, his amendment was always of the briefest duration, and he soon returned to his evil courses.

About six years after her marriage Jane M'Carthy died of consumption, brought on by hard work, anxiety and grief. Her husband's bad conduct and his constant ill-treatment had broken her heart. But in her affliction she had turned for help and consolation to the only source of real comfort; she had sought for Him who is never sought for in vain by those who really trust in Him. Into the Saviour's sympathizing ear she had poured out all her sorrows. As long as her strength would allow she regularly attended the services of the neighboring church, but when she grew too weak to leave even her bed, Mr. Newberry would often visit her and cheer her with the promises and consolations of the Gospel. She knew well that she must die, and for herself there was little indeed to make her wish to live; but her poor children, who would care for them, and what would be the fate of her husband, whom she still tenderly loved, — sunk as he was in vice and sin, and brutal as was his treatment of her, — after she was gone? The Vicar did his best to comfort her; he told her that God could

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melt the hardest heart, and that there was hope of repentance even to the vilest sinners. Her children she must trust to the care of Him who, when He was on earth, took the little ones in His arms and blessed them. He would put it into the hearts of kind neighbors and friends to do their best to care for them after she was gone.

Her good friend, Mrs. Archer, was at her side when Jane M'Carthy peacefully breathed her last, and till the funeral was over the two children were taken to live at the Archers' house. M'Carthy at first seemed to feel his wife's death very acutely; he expressed deep penitence for his unkind conduct towards her, he accused himself, and not unjustly, of having been the cause of her death, he shed many bitter tears and went into paroxysms of grief. His children should now be his special care, they should never want, he would work like a slave to support them and provide them with everything needful for their comfort. Captain Archer, who happened to be at home at the time, really hoped that M'Carthy's repentance was this time sincere, and that the heavy trial would not be altogether lost upon him.

Taking Dan with him, he removed to a smaller lodging in the same street, while little Kate was sent to live with an aunt, an elder sister of her mother, who kept a small shop in Stonehouse.

For some months M'Carthy worked steadily in a situation which Mr. Newberry had obtained for him; then he gradually fell back into his old, evil courses, till his conduct at last became so unsatisfactory that his employer was obliged, after repeated remonstrances, to dismiss him from his post.

His character for drunkenness and idleness had become so notorious that no one would give him regular employment; he lived from hand to mouth, picking up a job now and then, and generally spending all the money he received in drink; as to his son, the poor boy was often hungry,

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and would have starved sometimes had not kind neighbors given him a meal; but his father's example had a bad effect on him. He grew up idle and mischievous, he was the worst boy at the National School, and the ring-leader in every vicious scheme or wild freak among the scholars.

When the cholera broke out in Plymouth M'Carthy was one of its first victims. His son could hardly be expected to mourn much for a father who had always neglected and often ill-treated him. The parish, now bound to provide for the lad, sent him to the union, where he was brought under stricter discipline than he had ever endured in his short life before.

When he had reached the age of twelve he was sent back to Plymouth and apprenticed to a shoemaker; in three months' time he ran away to sea, and became a cabin-boy on board a collier. Here he was made to work; there was no means of escape during the voyage, and Dan had a hard time enough of it.

On returning to Plymouth he lived much as his father had done before him, loafing about the streets, now selling lucifer matches or newspapers, now cleaning boots, holding horses, or running on errands. Once indeed he again tried the sea, and was absent for nearly a year, but the hard work on board ship did not suit his lazy character, and he made up his mind that he would not try it again unless reduced to very sore straits indeed.

Meanwhile his sister continued to live with her aunt, regularly attending both day and Sunday school, and growing up a quiet, modest girl, a perfect contrast to her idle brother. But they dearly loved each other, nevertheless; the tender point in Dan's heart was his affection for his sister, she had more influence over him than any one else; if he ever was steady for a while it was owing to Kate's persuasions; any little money she earned was spent on him; she would patch his ragged, shabby clothes, and

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do all in her power to make him look tidy and decent. Now and then she would induce him to go to church, where he generally yawned or slept through the service, but she never abandoned the hope that Dan would reform at last and turn out a steady man.

Owing to the intimacy of their parents, Dan and Kate had always been friends with Martin. He and Kate frequently arranged to meet at the Sunday-school, and after church they would walk back together to her aunt's house. On these occasions they often talked about Dan, and though Martin was quite weary of the troublesome, lazy fellow, whom neither kindness nor severity seemed to influence for good, and who by his constant appeals for money or victuals was a perfect thorn in his side, yet his devotion to Kate always made him patient with her brother, and he would listen quietly to the schemes she planned for his reformation, unsuccessful as they always turned out to be.

Martin was vexed and annoyed to be bothered by Dan while he was standing on the Hoe looking out for the "Diana"; it was never very easy to get rid of the fellow, especially if his demands were left unsatisfied, and Martin could not very well spare sixpence at that moment.

"What are you up to now, Dan?" he said; "doing nothing, as usual, I suppose?"

"I haven't been able to get a job for several days now, Martin; not a morsel have I had to eat since yesterday afternoon, when Kate give me a slice of bread-and-butter, — just at the time,— bad luck to her — Aunt Sarah came into the shop; she blew me up like blazes, and Kate, too, for giving me food; she said I was a lazy good-for-nothing, and not a morsel of bread should I have from her again till I got some regular work."

"Your aunt wasn't far wrong, Dan; why don't you get some work and stick to it?"

"Well, Martin, you see I'm naturally fond of change and variety, and" ——

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"Change and variety! stuff and nonsense!" cried Martin. "If everybody was of that opinion I should like to know how the world would go on."

"Come, don't be hard upon me, Martin; as I've often told you before, I'm going to reform; and I'll tell you a piece of news: I'm going to sea again ere long."

"Indeed! and what vessel are you going to sail in?"

"In the 'Diana,' the ship you're now looking out for. I mean to go along with you, Martin; I know you'll say a good word for me to your father the captain."

"I shall do nothing of the kind," replied Martin, angrily; "It's bad enough to be always plagued with you on shore, it will be worse still to be shut up with you on board ship."

"I mean to go, Martin," replied Dan, doggedly, "so I expect you'll have to put up with me."

Martin did not reply; he turned away as if to leave the Hoe, but was followed by his persistent tormentor.

"Listen, Martin," he said, whiningly, "just this once, I'm so hungry; if you'll only lend me twopence, just to buy a loaf of bread, I'll be satisfied and go away. Ah! if Kate was only here she'd persuade you to help me, I know; you wouldn't be so cross with me, Martin, if my sister was with me."

The mention of Kate's name was generally Dan's last resource on these occasions; as usual, it had the desired effect; Martin silently handed him the asked-for twopence. Dan thanked him, and hastened away, leaving Martin still on the lookout for his father's ship, and with his former bright prospects not a little clouded by the idea of Dan becoming his shipmate on his first and long wished-for voyage.

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CHAPTER II.

AUNT AND NIECE.

"Through every web of life the dark threads run;
Oh, why and whither? God knows all."
— WHITTIER.

"Blessing she is: God made her so,
And deeds of week-day holiness
Fall from her noiseless as the snow;
Nor hath she even chanced to know
That aught were easier than to bless."
— J. R. LOWELL.

DAN was really hungry; he sped away to the nearest baker's to purchase as much bread as Martin's twopence could supply him with, and then strolled along the streets eating as he went. He looked out for a job, but there were no horses to be held this morning, no parcels to be carried, no one on the lookout for a boy to run on an errand, so he strolled along Union street, and when he reached Stonehouse, turned down the street where was his aunt's little shop, and where he and his sister lodged.

It was the hour he knew when his aunt generally went to market, his sister, therefore, would probably be in the shop alone; and after the storm of yesterday he felt no inclination to encounter his aunt, whose patience he had tried to the uttermost, and who had made up her mind that she could no longer stand his laziness and bad conduct. But Kate always received him kindly; she would rather go without a meal herself than that he should be hungry; and now in all probability she had put by some of her breakfast for him, guessing that he had had none, and would eagerly be on the lookout to welcome him.

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Dan stealthily approached the shop-window, peering in at a corner where he could not be seen by those behind the counter. He was right; his aunt was not in the shop, but Kate was there busily attending to several customers.

It was one of those shops, common in the back streets of large towns, where all sorts of things are sold — groceries, provisions, tobacco, newspapers, tapes, buttons, boot-laces, all mixed together in what seemed to a stranger wonderful confusion. The old-fashioned window-front was dusty and dingy, and the goods therein displayed were decidedly not of an attractive character. The counter was laden with canisters, bottles, packets of candles, sausages, etc.; barrels, boxes, and bales of goods were piled up on the floor. The whole place was pervaded by a strong mingled odor of cheese, bacon, soap, and tallow. Presiding over this store of varied articles was a young girl of about fourteen, who appeared wonderfully sharp and intelligent for her age, and seemed quite able to attend alone to the requirements of her customers, weighing out sugar for one, tea to another, supplying tobacco to a third, giving change to a fourth, quietly but quickly, and showing no signs of flurry or hesitation. In appearance she was tall and dark, with bright, cheerful eyes and kindly features. Dan watched her intently from the position he had taken up in the street, and as soon as the last customer had left the shop he cautiously entered, not without an anxious look towards the door at the back of the shop, through which the dreaded figure of his aunt might at any moment emerge.

"Kate! Kate!" he said in a whisper, "are you alone? has Aunt Sarah gone to market?"

"Yes, Dan, yes, she went about twenty minutes ago and won't be back for half an hour yet, and I've kept such a fine large slice of bread and treacle for you from my breakfast."

"Ah! and glad enough I'll be of it, Kate, for I'm just awful hungry this morning," replied Dan.

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"Here it is; sit down and eat it," said Kate, "on the box there; and have not you had anything to eat then since yesterday afternoon?"

"Well, to tell you the truth, Kate, I've had twopen'worth of bread this morning."

"Oh, you have indeed; how comes it then you are so very hungry?" asked his sister; "and how did you manage to get it?"

"It ain't much when one hasn't eaten a morsel for fifteen hours, Kate; and you know I'm always hungry. I got twopence to buy the bread out of Martin an hour ago."

"Out of Martin again!" said Kate. "I wish, Dan, you would leave poor Martin alone."

"It's little I should get out of him if it weren't for you, Kate. I asked him for sixpence, but he turned his back on me and wouldn't have a word to say to me; but when I said that if you were there he'd give it me fast enough, he forked out twopence at once, and I believe that's all he had in his pocket."

"You are a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow, Dan," said Kate, sternly; "you won't work yourself, and try to live on other peoples' earnings; I'm quite out of patience with you. I have told you before and now tell you again that I will not have you constantly going to beg of Martin Archer. He hasn't much to spare himself, only he's too good-natured to refuse you. I shall tell him on Sunday not to give you anything more. I only wish you'd work like him, and be a credit to your family instead of a disgrace."

"Martin's too fond of you, sister, to refuse your brother a morsel of bread when he's hungry; and as to work—well, what am I to work at?"

"Work is always to be found by those who are willing to do it, Dan," replied Kate.

"I'm thinking of going to sea again," remarked Dan, after a pause, during which he had been devouring the slice of bread-and-treacle.

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"Are you, indeed? and I should like to know who you are going to sail with this time? After the character you have got from the captains you sailed with before, there are not many who'll care to have you, I think."

"Captain Archer's expected back to-day, Martin tells me, and I mean to sail with him in the 'Diana' next voyage," replied Dan.

"Indeed! I should like to see Captain Archer taking a good-for-nothing fellow like you with him. I suppose you want to go along with Martin, who sails with his father next voyage?"

"Of course I do; I'm going to turn over a new leaf altogether, Kate, so I want to go with steady fellows who'll help to keep me steady. I've never had a chance yet; just think of the lot I've sailed with."

"There may be some truth in that," replied his sister, thoughtfully.

"Now, Kate, I just want you to say a good word for me to Martin and his father; they'll listen to you, I know," said Dan, imploringly.

Before she could reply Aunt Sarah, with a large market-basket on one arm and several large parcels on the other, entered the shop. When she perceived Dan seated comfortably on the box talking to his sister, she could not control her wrath; she hastily deposited her basket and parcels on the counter, and rushing up to Dan, she seized him by the shoulders, shook him violently, and ejected him from the premises.

"You lazy good-for-nothing vagabond," she exclaimed, "get out of my sight. I should like to know what you are doing here; didn't I tell you yesterday that not a morsel of bread should you have of me till you get some regular work? If it hadn't been for your mother's sake I'd have turned you out of the house long ago; and now I tell you, Dan, I've made up my mind that if you don't get employment within the next week you must find a lodging else-

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where, for I'll have you here no longer. And as to you, Kate, you ought to be ashamed of yourself encouraging him in his idle ways; he knows he'll get food from you, and there's anything he'd do rather than work. You're a disgrace to the neighborhood, you lazy varlet; you'll come to the gallows at last, I know."

"Aunt, aunt," implored Kate, "do be gentle with him: he wasn't doing any harm, I assure you; he came to tell me he meant to turn over a new leaf, and" ——

"New leaf, indeed; I don't believe in new leaves any longer, I've heard so much about them; I'm quite sick of the word," exclaimed Aunt Sarah, more angry than ever.

"It's true, aunt; indeed, it is," said Dan, in a whimpering voice; "only try me once more, and next month I'm going to sea, and you'll get rid of me for a while."

"Good riddance, indeed, as long as it lasts," cried his aunt; "and then you'll come back as you have done before, lazier and more mischievous than ever."

"No, I shan't, aunt; I'm going to reform, indeed I am," implored Dan.

"Stuff and nonsense!—be off with you, and don't let me see you loitering about here any more; and remember, if you don't get work of some kind I'll turn you out of doors, and you shall sleep here no longer."

Dan turned away down the street; tears were now flowing down Kate's cheeks. With the disappearance of her obnoxious nephew Aunt Sarah's ire began to subside.

"You ought not to encourage the boy in his idle, bad ways, Kate," she said. "I know you've been starving yourself again to give him something to eat; he'll never mend till he has to suffer hunger, the pangs of which I want him to feel, then he'd be obliged to work,—the vagabond!—but you go and feed him every day, so, of course, he'll do nothing. I won't have it, Kate, I tell you."

Aunt Sarah was a tall, gaunt woman, of somewhat severe

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aspect. Her manners were not agreeable, nor her appearance captivating. In early life she had been crossed in love, which had unfortunately soured her temper forever after, and caused her to regard with special enmity every member of the male sex, irrespective of age or rank. The disreputable career of her brother-in-law, and the consequent sufferings of her poor sister, had confirmed her in her prejudices. To Dan she had always been severe; rarely had she a civil, much less a kind word for him; her constant rebuking, scolding, and fault-finding had not a little to do with his unsatisfactory behavior; she had made home so hateful to him since his father's death (for his mother's sake only she had allowed him a bed in a tiny garret), that he would rather be in the streets all day than in the same room or shop with his aunt, gladly as he would seek his sister's society when he could enjoy it alone. On the other hand, Kate was Aunt Sarah's special favorite; to her she was generally kind and indulgent: there were only two subjects on which they differed, one was about Dan, the other respecting Martin Archer, of whose intimacy with Kate Aunt Sarah highly disapproved. She could find no fault with Martin, he was far too quiet and steady, her only objection to him therefore was his sex. If she ever spoke a cross or angry word to Kate it was after she had espoused her brother's cause, or when she was seen coming home from school or church in company with Martin. Really a kind-hearted woman, Aunt Sarah had been soured by misfortunes and warped by prejudice. Her bark was decidedly worse than her bite.

"Don't be so hard on the poor fellow, aunt," said Kate; "I'm sure this time he means to be better. He is going to try to get a berth in Captain Archer's ship next voyage."

"I wish Captain Archer joy of the vagabond, but it's not likely he'll take him; as you tell me Martin is going with him, too, I should get rid of two pests at once; ah, I fear there's no such good luck for me."

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"I'm sure, aunt," replied Kate with spirit, "that whatever Dan may have done, Martin never gave you any trouble; there's not a quieter or better behaved boy in Plymouth; why do you call him a pest, aunt?"

"Because he's always running after you on Sundays and holidays; it's quite bad enough now, but when you both get older, it won't do at all; no, I shan't stand it then, I can tell you, Kate. I'll have no followers here, neither boys nor men; I can't abide the sight of either."

To reply on this delicate matter she knew would only irritate her aunt all the more, so Kate was silent; just at that moment, too, a customer fortunately entered the shop, putting an end to the conversation.

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CHAPTER III.

FATHER AND SON.

"Cares are thine, cares and the unselfish mind,
Which spends itself for others, and can find
How blest it is, without return to give,
Whate'er thy speech or race, thou art the same;
Before thy eyes, duty, a constant flame,
Shines always, steadfast with unchanging light,
Through dark days and through bright."

— "THE ODE OF LIFE."

ALL day Martin continued his lookout on the Hoe, eagerly scanning each sail as it appeared on the horizon, and grew more and more distinct on approaching the breakwater. It was not till about six in the evening that his patient watch was rewarded by the certainty that a vessel he had been narrowly observing for the last hour was indeed the "Diana," which, borne rapidly onward by a favorable breeze, would very soon be within the breakwater. He knew the flag, the build, and rig of the vessel too well to be deceived; he hastened down to the steps below the Hoe, and jumping into a boat, rowed himself off to be the first to get on board the brigantine, and greet his father on his return home. Before the "Diana" had dropped her anchor, Martin had sprung on board and was in his father's arms.

Joyful and affectionate was the meeting between father and son. The captain had been absent nearly four months, his voyage having been longer than usual. He too had been looking forward to its close as eagerly as his son, and for the same reason, because next time he sailed Martin was to be with him, and he would not again have to endure

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that parting from his only son, which each time he left Plymouth seemed increasingly painful.

"How you are grown, Martin, my boy!" he exclaimed with delight, as grasping both his hands he looked into his son's bright, happy face, "and you look strong and well, too."

"Yes, father, that I am, and in good trim to sail with you next voyage. And you look well too, though more sunburnt than usual. Have you had a good cruise this time; and has all gone well?"

"Yes, Martin, fairly well," replied the captain, "though we've had more than our share of rough weather and contrary winds. And how's your grandmother?"

"Troubled now and then with rheumatism, father; but she'll be all the better when she sees your face again. She said this morning she already felt better only at the prospect of having you at home once more. The time has seemed so long to us since you sailed."

"Well, it won't be long now before I'm at home again," said the captain; "I must not talk to you any longer, Martin, but bring the 'Diana' to her moorings." The captain gave his orders to the men, Martin went to help at the capstan and the ropes. All was bustle on board; each man was eager to get his work done as soon as possible, and hurry on shore.

It was late at night before Martin and his father reached their home. Old Mrs. Archer was waiting up to welcome them; she knew that her son's ship must have arrived, or Martin would have been back long ere this. She was overjoyed to see her son again, and very affectionate was the meeting between them.

Since his great sorrow the captain always returned from these voyages with mingled feelings. Glad and thankful was he to find his beloved boy in good health, to clasp him once more in his arms; to learn that he was good and steady, and diligently preparing himself to follow his own

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calling; he rejoiced too to see the bright and cheerful face with which his old mother welcomed him back, telling him how she had been counting the days till his return, and that he was the very sunshine of her life. The warm, hearty greeting of his many friends, and especially of the worthy vicar, Mr. Newberry, was very pleasant to him; but, on the other hand, he could not help thinking of the days that were past never to return, of his dear lost wife and little ones, of the happy home to which he formerly returned, of that terrible day when on board his ship in the Sound he had first heard the crushing tidings of the pestilence which had desolated his hearth and blighted his future. Thoughts such as these would now and then arise in Stephen Archer's mind; he would sit for hours silent and gloomy by his fireside, heaving occasionally a deep sigh, and with difficulty repressing the tears which started to his eyes. Martin alone was able to rouse his father from these despondent fits, and to make him forget the sorrows of the past in the brighter prospects of the future.

For the next few days the captain's time was fully occupied in superintending the removal of the cargo from his ship to the docks. Martin was almost always at his side. He had seen no more of Dan, and in the joy of his father's return had almost forgotten the momentary cloud which the boy's proposal to sail with him on his first voyage had cast over his prospects, neither had he mentioned it to his father. He had seen Kate, indeed, the day after the "Diana's" arrival, for he had run into her aunt's shop to tell her the good news, but as she had said nothing about her brother, he made up his mind that Dan's project was merely a passing thought which would never be realized, or an empty threat uttered to annoy him. Sunday came; Martin and his father went to church as usual. During the captain's absence Mr. Newberry had taken Martin into the choir, for not only was he a steady, well-behaved boy, but had a good voice, too; so he could not now sit with

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his father as he had been used to do. Mr. Newberry, who was standing at the church-door, heartily greeted Captain Archer, saying how pleased he was to see him back in Plymouth, and asking him several questions about his voyage; then he told him what satisfaction Martin had given him both in the Sunday-school and in the choir, and how sorry he should be to lose him, when he sailed, as he heard he was now so soon to do, on his first voyage.

When Martin came into church with the other choristers, he saw his father's tall figure in his accustomed seat, but he was not a little surprised to observe sitting on the same bench his old playmate, Dan M'Carthy, so changed in appearance that but for his features it would not have been easy to recognize him; he was dressed in a tidy suit of clothes, his face was washed and his hair well brushed; beside him sat his sister, whose radiant countenance seemed to indicate the pride she felt at having been instrumental in this alteration in her brother's person. Dan's behavior during the service was quite in accordance with his neat appearance. For once, at all events, his sister seemed to have him quite under her control. Martin wondered whether this reform would be permanent, or as fleeting as other attempts in the same direction had previously been.

When the service was over Martin found his father waiting outside for him, together with Kate and her brother. The captain had not seen them since his return, and he could not help complimenting Dan on his smartened looks, for when he had last seen him he was completely in rags, dirty and unkempt. Dan looked modest and hung his head; Kate replied that her brother was going to try and mend his ways by taking Martin for his model. Just then the latter came up; he greeted Kate warmly and nodded familiarly to Dan. When at that moment his father turned away to speak to an acquaintance, he said to him, laughing, "Why, Dan, what has come to you? I never saw you look so respectable before in my life."

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"Didn't I tell you, Martin, last Tuesday, that I was going to turn over a new leaf, and reform outright? and now you may see I spoke the truth, and meant what I said," replied Dan.

"Have you got some regular work and wages then?" inquired Martin.

"Well, I've been lucky in finding a few odd jobs lately, but I still hope to go to sea with you, Martin, so I haven't looked out for any regular place."

Martin's countenance fell at once; he remembered his conversation with Dan on the Hoe, and how determined he then seemed to sail in his father's ship; he hadn't given up the plan, then; there was still a chance of his being worried by his troublesome playmate on his first voyage.

Kate marked the expression of Martin's countenance at once. She said imploringly, "Yes, Martin, I really think Dan will reform this time, he has been so steady and industrious all the week; even Aunt Sarah had to confess herself last night that for three days he'd given her no trouble, and so she allowed him to take his meals with us, which he hasn't been let to do for the last week, and I've sat up late every night patching up these clothes for him that he might go to church with me to-day and look respectable, and I'm sure Dan's looks have done me credit. Now Martin, do say a word to your father for poor Dan, he wants so much to sail with you and him. It may be the making of him, you know; do help to give the poor fellow another chance."

"You won't repent it, Martin, I assure you," added Dan. "I mean to take you as my example in everything, and I couldn't find a better anywhere, and there's not a captain in the whole world I'd sooner sail under than Captain Archer."

"That's all your Irish blarney, Dan; I know what it's worth," said Martin.

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"For my sake, Martin, say a good word for my brother just this once," entreated Kate.

"Well, Kate, you know well enough one word from you has more weight with me than a hundred from Dan; besides, I'm sure, if he really means to reform, be steady, and work hard, I've no objection to his sailing in the same ship with me. We've always been good friends, and it's only because he bothers me by wanting to borrow money, or by hindering me when I want to work, or by leading me into mischief, that I have any quarrel with him."

"That's right, Martin," said Kate, cheerfully, then you'll speak up for him, won't you?"

"Very well, Kate, I'll do my best; I only hope I shan't have cause to repent it," he replied, sadly.

The captain now joined the three young people; he asked Kate several questions about her aunt and herself, he also inquired of Dan what he had been doing lately, and what were his intentions and prospects in life; these questions Dan either evaded or gave as plausible answers to as possible.

At dinner the captain remarked to his son:—

"How very much improved that boy, Dan M'Carthy, appears to be, Martin. I scarcely knew him again when I met him coming out of church to-day; the last time I saw him he was as ragged and dirty a looking fellow as could be found in all Plymouth."

"It's only quite lately that he s smartened himself up so, father," replied Martin; "his sister has had a great deal to do with it."

"I could not quite gather from his answers whether he'd any regular work. What's he doing now, Martin?"

"Why, nothing, father, only any odd jobs he can pick up. He never stuck long to anything, but he's got a plan in his head now, and savs he means to be steady and industrious."

"I'm afraid he's very much like his fatner," replied

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the captain; "he never would work at anything for long; a terrible lazy follow he was, and led his poor wife a sad life. But what's Dan thinking of doing now, Martin?"

"He wants to go to sea again, father."

"Has he been before, Martin? asked the captain.

"Yes, twice; but he didn't like it, and the last time I believe he ran away; he says he was ill-treated by the captain and crew, and made to work too hard. He wants another chance; his wish is to sail under you, father, and both he and Kate have begged me to say a word to you in his favor," said Martin, somewhat hesitatingly.

"It doesn't rest altogether with me, Martin, what hands I take on board; he must apply to Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, and unless he brings a good character they're not likely to let him sail in one of their ships. At the same time I can generally have men or boys I want to go on board with me, but I certainly don't desire to have a son of Pat M'Carthy for a shipmate."

"Well, father, Kate says it may be the making of her brother to put him with any one who will really look after him and try to keep him steady. It isn't that I want him to go with us; still I should like the poor fellow to have a chance of getting a better character, and making his way in life."

"I'll think the matter over, Martin, but you must remember that I can't always be looking after lazy apprentices; I've quite enough work to do on board without that; and though I generally try to get a crew of steady, sober men to sail with me, there are almost always some wild fellows among them with whom a badly-disposed boy would very likely associate. I don't think, Martin, that this M'Carthy will be a desirable mate for you either."

No more was said on the subject that day. On Monday morning Martin went to her aunt's shop, at an hour when he hoped to find Kate alone.

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She welcomed him with pleasure. "I've done what you wished, Kate," he said at once. "I spoke a word in Dan's favor to my father yesterday."

"Thank you, thank you, Martin," she replied. "And what did he say?"

"He didn't refuse; he said he must think the matter over, but that Dan must apply to Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, the shipowners, on the Barbican. Unless he brings a good character father doesn't think they'll take Dan, and it's plain enough he doesn't want to have him; but when I spoke about giving him a last chance, and of making him turn out a steady man, he seemed rather inclined to listen to me."

"It's very good of you, indeed, Martin, to have said so much in my poor brother's favor. I hope it won't have been in vain."

"I think Dan had better speak up for himself now, and go to Willis & Dobbs as soon as possible," said Martin.

"He's got work again to-day down at the docks, I'm glad to say, but to-morrow I'll take care he goes. Look! there's my aunt coming along down the street; make haste and be off; I shall never hear the end of it if she finds you here."

Martin hurried away, fortunately escaping Aunt Sarah's sharp eyes, and just as he left the shop a customer came in, to whom the attention of both aunt and niece was immediately turned.

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CHAPTER IV.

PREPARING TO SAIL.

"A thousand leagues away, my Kate,
A thousand leagues away;
God will befriend the lad you send
A thousand leagues away."

— W. C. BENNETT.

"Do you know anything of a lad named M'Carthy, Captain Archer?" asked the head of the firm of Willis & Dobbs of the captain on the following Wednesday, when he had come into their counting-house on business connected with his next voyage.

"Oh yes, sir, I know the boy well enough," was the reply.

"What sort of a character does he bear?"

"Not the best, I fear, sir," said Archer.

"He was in here yesterday morning, begging to be allowed to sail with you in the 'Diana.' He described himself as a great friend of your son, Martin; he said too that you knew him very well."

The captain smiled. "It's true enough that I know him, and knew his father too before him."

"You don't seem to have much to say in the lad's favor, captain," said Mr. Willis," but he seems to be a great chum of Martin's."

"By his own account, sir; Martin might tell a different story."

"Indeed. Then it doesn't seem as if either you or your son had any particular wish for his company on board the 'Diana.'"

"No, sir," replied the captain; "the truth is, neither of us

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have; but at the same time, I should be very sorry to stand in the way of Dan's doing anything to better himself. He's got into lazy habits, and if he goes on as he has been doing he'll be as bad as his father before him, and perhaps come to a like end."

"Very true. I understand that his father was a sad drunkard, and at last fell a victim to the cholera. On inquiry about this fellow Dan we find that he has already been to sea twice, and on both occasions gave his employers trouble enough. We got a very indifferent character of him from them."

"I'm not surprised at that, sir; but if it's your pleasure, I'm quite willing that the lad should have another chance. For the sake of his poor mother that's gone, and of his sister, a steady, industrious girl as ever lived, I'd take Dan with me this voyage, and do my best to make something of him."

"That's kind enough of you, captain, for the fellow may prove a great plague on the voyage; but we'll consult about it and let you know our decision by the end of the week."

At dinner that day, Captain Archer told his son that Dan had already applied to Willis & Dobbs for a berth in the "Diana," and that in all probability his request would be granted.

In the afternoon Martin hastened to tell Kate what he knew would be good news to her, though it was hardly so to him.

She was busy in the shop, but greeted Martin with a friendly smile. As soon as she had finished serving her customers, he bent over the counter and said to her: "Willis & Dobbs spoke to father this morning about Dan, and he said he was willing to take him. They hadn't quite made up their minds about it, but they're going to let father know at the end of the week."

"Oh! I am glad!" replied Kate, her whole countenance

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brightening up with joy. "How good of Captain Archer! thank you, thank you, Martin."

"But it's not quite certain yet. They may refuse to have Dan; you mustn't make too sure," said Martin.

"Oh! as your father doesn't object, I think they hardly can — but here comes" ——

She had not finished the sentence before the gaunt figure of Aunt Sarah appeared from behind the shop. In a shrill and angry voice, amounting almost to a shriek, she exclaimed: —

"Kate! what are you about? I'm ashamed of you, talking, laughing, idling away your time with boys, instead of attending to my shop. Get out of my sight this instant," she said, as she turned wrathfully upon Martin; "a lazy rascal, lolling about here; let me never catch you on my premises again, or it will be the worse for you, I can tell you; nice company indeed for you, Kate; I'd hoped to bring you up respectable — never thought that at such an early age you'd have a parcel of good-for-nothing young men and boys a-fooling after you, and lounging about on my counter. I'll soon put a stop to such goings-on, I will. You will have to shift for yourself, Miss Kate, I can tell you, for I'll keep you here no longer if you can't behave yourself like a decent young woman. I'll have no men or boys here, bad luck to the whole lot of them, and if I ever catch you talking to any of them again in that familiar manner" ——

"Aunt, aunt!" cried Kate, endeavoring to stop the rapid volubility of her incensed relative, "do hear me; it was only Martin Archer who" ——

"Only Martin Archer, indeed! a fellow who's always hanging about after you, Kate, morning, noon, and night; I hate the very sight of him."

"Why, aunt, I've only seen him once before this week; he's far too busy just now to come here, except for some good reason, and he came to tell me that he hopes Willis

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& Dobbs will consent to give Dan a berth in the 'Diana' on her next voyage."

"In which I trust that vagabond Martin is going to sail, too," continued Aunt Sarah.

It is needless to say that Martin had fled as soon as the formidable aunt had made her appearance. It was more than Kate could stand, to hear such epithets as vagabond and lazy fellow applied to her friend; she replied with spirit: "You've no right to call Martin such names, aunt, as I told you the other day. No one has a word to say against him, except you."

"No arguing with me, Miss, if you please," said Aunt Sarah. "I'll not be answered back in that way; this comes of keeping such company as you've been doing of late."

At that moment several customers came in, and put an end to Aunt Sarah's wrathful speeches, and to her niece's tearful remonstrances.

All the week Dan continued steadily at work; he was not once to be seen loitering about the streets; next Sunday he was again in church, where his behavior was quiet and sedate. He joined Martin and his father when the service was over.

"I've good news for you, Dan," said the latter. "Willis & Dobbs told me yesterday that, with my consent, which I have already given, they'd give you a berth on board the 'Diana' next voyage. You don't bear a good character they find on inquiry, but they're willing to give you a chance to reform and turn over a new leaf. Now, I hope, Dan, you mean to take advantage of this, to become a good steady fellow; obey orders strictly, work hard, tell the truth, and be thoroughly honest, so that I shall be able to give you a good character when we put back to Plymouth."

"You'll never repent your kindness to me, captain," cried Dan; "there's not a lad in all Plymouth that'll have such a first-rate character as I shall get from you and from Willis & Dobbs, too, when I come home."

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"Come, come, Dan; don't boast too much," said the captain, seriously. "I'd rather hear a young fellow say 'I'll try and do my best, and hope I shall succeed,' than talk in such a bold, confident manner."

"Ah! captain; sure enough, I said it to please you," replied Dan; "try and do my best, that indeed I will, and succeed, too, I hope."

"That's always the way with him, father," said Martin, after Dan had left them; "he's so full of fine promises and grand speeches, which never come to anything, though I must say he has been better the last fortnight."

"Well, we'll hope the improvement will continue, and we must do our best to keep him straight, Martin," replied his father.

In another ten days the "Diana" was to sail. The captain was fully occupied superintending the storing of the cargo and the cleaning up of his vessel. Martin was generally at his father's side, ready to lend a helping hand whenever it was necessary. Dan worked on steadily at the docks, where just then labor of any kind was much in demand. His sister only saw him when he came home of a night to his supper and bed. With the prospect of his speedy departure, and as there was nothing in his behavior to irritate her temper, Aunt Sarah refrained from her usual attacks upon her troublesome nephew.

A few days before that appointed for the sailing of the "Diana," Mr. Newberry sent for Martin to have a talk with him and give him some good advice before they parted. He took this opportunity of doing so.

"Martin," he said, "away from home as you will be, and deprived of the ordinances of public worship, you may be less able to guard against the special temptations to which your new mode of life will expose you."

"Yes, sir, I'll try to think about it, though, as you say, there won't be so much time at sea as there is at home for

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reading good books, and no chance of going to church either."

"When you are in a port, Martin, you'll often be able to go to church, and then your father always reads the prayers and lessons on Sunday with the crew, I know, on board his ship."

"Yes, sir, he does; and going with my father will, I hope, keep me straight, and prevent me from getting into scrapes," said Martin.

"You have a great advantage, my lad, over most others of your age," continued Mr. Newberry, "not only in making your first voyage under your father, but with such a thoroughly steady, trustworthy, and excellent man as that father is; but you must not altogether rely upon that to keep you straight, as you say, and out of scrapes; your father won't be always at your elbow; there'll be times when you'll have to stand temptation — sharp temptation, perhaps — alone. Then you must look to One who is as willing and far abler than your father to help you, and Who, if you live in continual dependence on Him, and with a constant sense of His presence, will never leave you nor forsake you in the sorest trials and fiercest temptations."

"I expect at first if I try to do right I shall be laughed at by my shipmates, sir," replied Martin, "but I don't mean to give way to them."

"Don't be too confident, Martin; 'let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall'; the very fact of your having your father with you may put you off your guard. I am sorry that Dan M'Carthy is going to sail with you, for your sake — not for his — for I don't think he's a good companion for you."

"Neither father nor I would have chosen him, sir, but father thought it right he should have another chance of doing something for himself in the world, so he consented to take him. I can't say I'm pleased at it — but Dan is

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not likely to lead me into mischief; I hope I'm more likely to keep him out of it."

"So do I," replied Mr. Newberry, "but don't be too sure: he has got you into more than one scrape already."

Martin was silent, for he could not deny this. The vicar continued:—

"Well, Martin, I shall hope for the best, both for you and Dan. I trust this voyage may be the making of him, and that he will come back a steady, industrious lad. I am sorry to part with you, Martin, for I have never lost sight of you, I may say, during your whole life; I was with your good mother in her last hour; I was the first to tell your poor father of his terrible loss; you have been every Sunday in my school, and latterly in our choir, and but little fault have I had to find with you. And now that you are going out into the great wide world, may God watch over and protect you! Do your duty, Martin, humbly and faithfully, however distasteful or irksome that duty may be. Don't shirk your work — do it heartily and cheerfully if possible. Remember that your daily appointed duty is work not only for man but for God, for He it is who has ordained it for you. When your conscience tells you plainly that you are doing right never be afraid. Keep yourself pure, abstain from all vile and profane language, and don't laugh at those who use it. Never be ashamed to confess and own your Saviour, and He will never be ashamed of you, nor forsake you in your hour of need."

Tears stood in the lad's eyes as he listened to the good man's earnest words. His heart was too full to reply.

"Good-by, Martin; may God bless you, and keep you, and bring you back safely to Plymouth, and your father, too," he continued, as he affectionately placed his hand on the boy's head.

"Good-by, sir. Thank you for all your kindness," said Martin. "I'll do my best to profit by all you've said to me to-day."

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The lad walked away with an earnest, serious face, as if deeply impressed by the good parson's words.

On the evening before the day fixed for the sailing of the "Diana" Martin went to say "good-by" to Kate, Aunt Sarah being fortunately out of the way at the time. He was in high spirits at the prospect of the voyage, and seemed to have got over his repugnance to having Dan for a shipmate. This was probably owing to Dan's improved conduct, which had latterly been so apparent to every one.

"You'll keep your eye on Dan, won't you, Martin?" said Kate, imploringly, as the tears started to her eyes. "He's no one to look after him, poor boy! and you'll say a kind word for him to the captain now and then, I hope."

"Dan 'll have nothing to fear if he works on as steadily as he has done the last few days, Kate," said Martin.

"He tells me he will. He means to stick to you, and take you for an example in everything," replied Kate.

"Well, he might find a better," said Martin, smiling. "Never fear, Kate; I'll promise to be a friend to Dan, and look after him as well as I can — for your sake, at all events. But good-by; I mustn't stay any longer; father wants me at home, and if I don't look sharp I shall have Aunt Sarah catching me, as she did last week; so good-by, Kate, and take care of yourself."

"Good-by, Martin," she replied, in as cheerful a voice as she could assume. "A pleasant voyage to you. May God protect you and bring you safe back again!"

Kate had been busily employed for the last fortnight patching up Dan's old clothes, and making him new ones so far as she was able, and now she set to work to pack his chest, which early next morning was to be taken on board the "Diana."

"I've seen Martin this evening," she said to Dan before

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they went to bed. "He came to say good-by to me, and I asked him to say a kind word for you now and then, Dan, to his father. He promised he would."

"Ah! Kate, Martin 'll do anything for you, but when you're not in the way, perhaps, I'll not find him so agreeable. But ain't I just lucky in having got that berth in the 'Diana'? I'm sure I never expected it."

"Yes, you ought to be very thankful, Dan, for getting such a good chance. If you only keep steady and do your duty you may come back with a good character, and be able to make your way in the world."

"Never fear that, Kate. My character is quite changed; I'm thoroughly steady now; think how hard I've worked for the last fortnight. I shall be a captain some day; that's certain, sister."

"Don't boast in that silly way, Dan," she said, seriously. "I'd have much more hope about you if you didn't talk like that. How often have you said the same thing before?"

"It may be, but this time I'm in real earnest, I assure you," replied Dan, confidently.

Early next morning brother and sister had to part. Kate repeated her good advice. Dan replied, reasserting his determination to be steady and industrious.

"God bless you, Dan," she said, as they tenderly embraced. "Don't make too sure that you'll keep steady, for if you do you're all the more likely to fall. Don't forget to say your prayers and read the Testament I gave you last night — that little one that belonged to our poor mother. I shall pray for you every day, Dan, and ask God to protect you from all dangers on the great deep, and to preserve you, too, from falling into sin."

"Thank you, Kate, and I'll pray for you, too, and read the Testament, I promise you. And now good-by, sister. Take care of yourself, that I may find you well and hearty when I come back"; and so they parted. Dan trudged

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off to the wharf; Kate, trying ineffectually to check her tears, busied herself in the shop.

The crew of the "Diana" consisted of ten men, including the mate, and three boys, Martin, Dan, and Tom Fowler; the latter, a Plymouth lad, was also sailing on his first voyage. Captain Archer had the reputation of being a stern man and a strict disciplinarian; his word was law on board his ship, and the least act of insubordination was immediately punished. He was not, therefore, considered a popular captain at Plymouth, and the "Diana" was specially shunned by idle and dissipated seamen, who knew that under him they would have a hard time. His crew was in consequence generally composed of steady men, old shipmates accustomed to his ways, or new hands eager for a berth, who perhaps had made no inquiry as to the character of the skipper under whom they bound themselves to sail.

It was so on this occasion; the mate and four of the men had been with Captain Archer on previous voyages, the other five were strangers to him, some having volunteered only the day before. The "Diana" carried a full general cargo; she was bound first to Lisbon, then to the Mediterranean.

When early in the morning Martin and his father arrived on board, and whilst they were busy arranging the captain's cabin and putting everything straight, Archer said to his son:—

"You must remember, Martin, that as soon as we sail you must look upon me as the captain, and not as your father. I shall regard and treat you just as I do the other boys and seamen. It will never do for me to show any favoritism. If I did the men would not respect me, all discipline would be at an end, and it would be all the worse for you, as you would become an object of jealousy and dislike, which would be plain enough to you very soon in a hundred ways. If you are the least remiss in obeying

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either my orders or the mate's, if you don't do your duty exactly, or are anyways idle, I shall rebuke you as sharply and punish you as severely as any of the other hands. You will have no privilege whatever that the rest of the men have not; you will mess with them and share all their hardships and privations. Unless you learn thoroughly to rough it you'll never become a good seaman; and if I thought that I should be weak enough to indulge you beyond others, or spare you any work, however hard or unpleasant, I would not for your sake or my own have consented to your sailing with me."

"Of course, father, I quite understand; I don't wish you to treat me different from the rest. I mean to rough it just as they do; I can't expect to rise in the service unless I've borne the drudgery of it first."

"Very true, my boy; I'm glad you take such a sensible view of the matter. I see now we quite understand one another, and now go to your work at the forecastle. The mate will tell you what to do."

Just at that moment a boat came alongside the "Diana" with several men and boys in it. Among them were Dan and Tom Fowler. The captain greeted them kindly, and added a few serious words about doing their duty and strictly obeying orders.

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CHAPTER V.

MARTIN'S FIRST VOYAGE.

"Hurrah! the seaward breezes
Sweep down the bay amain;
Heave up, my lads, the anchor!
Run up the sail again!
Leave to the lubber landsman
The rail-car and the steed;
The stars of heaven shall guide us,
The breath of heaven shall speed.

From the hill-top looks the steeple,
And the lighthouse from the sand,
And the scattered pines are waving
Their farewell from the land.
One glance, my lads, behind us,
For the homes we leave, one sigh,
Ere we take the change and chances
Of the ocean and the sky.

In the darkness as in daylight,
On the water as on land,
God's eye is looking on us,
And beneath us is His hand!
Death will find us soon or later,
On the deck or in the cot;
And we cannot meet him better
Than in working out our lot.

— J. G. WHITTIER.

IT was not till late in the afternoon that the "Diana" weighed anchor, and, favored by a fair, gentle breeze, slowly glided from her moorings within the breakwater. Now there was work enough for Martin and Dan. Orders came in rapid succession from the captain, ropes had to be hauled in, sails unfurled or reefed. Dan was more expert at the work than Martin, because it was not his first experience; but Martin did his best, and won the approba-

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tion of the mate. Some of the new hands who had joined his ship the captain soon perceived to be a rough lot; one or two of them were the worse for drink. It is a common custom for sailors before sailing to spend their last hours on shore and their last coins in a drunken carouse at the public-house, and this was the case with these men. Those who were sober had in consequence all the more to do, and when evening came, and the green slopes, red cliffs, and bold headlands of Devon were fast fading from view, Martin felt more tired and sleepy than he had ever done in his life. He knew pretty well beforehand what the life would be, still he could not help feeling it rather rough at first. The hard narrow bunk in the forecastle allotted as his berth was a great contrast to his comfortable bed at home. The food, too, he found coarse and unpalatable. His shipmates treated him contemptuously as a land-lubber for his awkwardness, and set him to do the meanest jobs. Then in the middle of the night, just as he was beginning to feel comfortable, he was roused from his berth by the loud voice of the mate, ordering him to get up and take his turn at the watch. Then came two cold, dreary hours of watching. The sky was not so bright now, the moon was hidden by clouds, the ship rolled unpleasantly, and glad enough was Martin when he was relieved, and allowed to turn in again.

Next morning was dull and squally, the wind had risen, and there was every appearance of dirty weather in the Bay of Biscay, to whose ever-troubled waters the landsman looks forward with so much dread. Martin, as was to be expected, suffered all the horrors of sea-sickness, but he was obliged to do his work all the same, the inexorable mate showing him neither compassion nor sympathy, his complaint being one which never arouses either from those who happily possess immunity from it. Among these was Dan, who joined the other men in laughing and jeering at Martin and Tom Fowler, who was his fellow-sufferer.

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It was not till the evening of the second day that Martin was cheered by a kind word from his father. He was cleaning a lamp, as he had been told to do by the mate, and looked terribly pale and exhausted, when the captain passed him on his way to his cabin.

"Cheer up, my boy!" he said; "it won't last long. In another twenty-four hours you'll be all right again. I know what it is to have to work, and do dirty work, too, when one feels so sick, but I'm glad to see how pluckily you strive against it; it's one of the troubles that most sailors have to endure."

"Yes, father, I do feel very queer indeed, and sometimes have a difficulty to keep my legs; but I mean to work on just the same, and it's a comfort that you say I shall soon be better. Poor Tom Fowler is worse than I am."

With a friendly nod the captain passed on, and Martin continued at his work.

Next day Ushant was passed, and now the "Diana" had fairly entered the Bay, where she was greeted with half a gale of wind and huge rolling waves. Martin and Tom, who were both beginning to get over their sickness, had no little difficulty in keeping their legs; it was nervous work, too, for beginners having to go aloft in such weather, but the mate was a strict disciplinarian, and it had to be done. The captain's heart beat anxiously, and he could hardly repress a shudder when he saw Martin clinging to the maintop rigging the first time, while the ship was rolling and plunging in foam and surf, but he did not say a word. He breathed a fervent prayer to God that He would protect the lad, and shield him from danger. Martin looked pale enough when he came down, for though he had often climbed the rigging before, he soon found out that it was a very different matter in a gale of wind than in a smooth sea, and he had felt a bit afraid when the ship rolled and the mast to which he was clinging quivered with

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the shock of a huge wave; but when he saw his father below looking up at him, he took courage, performed his appointed task, and felt no little satisfaction at having accomplished it successfully. Next time it seemed comparatively easy, so that Dan could no longer chaff him on his clumsiness and ignorance.

For three days the bad weather lasted: strong, variable winds, a heavy sea, gloomy skies, and violent showers. All this time there was plenty of work for every man and boy on board. They were constantly wet to the skin, and there was little chance of getting dry again in the short intervals allotted for rest. But, like most unpleasant things in this world, the bad weather came to an end at last. The Spanish coast was sighted, the "Diana" was out of the Bay of Biscay, the sun shone once more, and the sea gradually calmed down. Every one looked cheerful now, the wind was fair, all sail was spread, and in a couple of days they hoped to reach the Tagus. Decks had to be washed, rigging repaired, the brass-work polished up, the masts scraped and greased, in all which necessary matters the three boys had to take their share, leaving very little idle time on their hands.

Since Dan had been at sea and fallen in with companions among the crew who were congenial to him, his conduct towards Martin had greatly changed. On shore Martin had been everything to him; he spoke of him with the greatest respect as his greatest friend, and treated him almost cringingly. Now he affected to look down upon him with contempt; he had been to sea before, which Martin had not; he found also, to his surprise, that the captain showed no partiality to his son, who had to rough it as much as the other boys, and that he never interfered in his favor; Dan was, therefore, all the more able to annoy Martin in many ways, mocking and chaffing him, telling the other sailors stories about his steady conduct on shore, his constant church-going and singing in the choir, which

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the worst among them made use of to jeer at him — none the less loth to do so because he was the son of the captain, whom they had already found out, to their no small disgust, to be one who insisted on implicit obedience, and was determined to maintain the strictest discipline. Martin bore it all without a word, but he deeply felt Dan's ingratitude, which he could not understand.

It had been a splendid day with a fair breeze; they had been sailing along the Portuguese coast, the sun had just set, and they were approaching the rocky islets called the Berlingas, on one of which stands a fine lighthouse. There was no particular work to do; the men were sitting idly about the deck, most of them smoking, some mending their clothes, all enjoying the beautiful evening and the pleasant breeze. Martin was leaning over the gunwale, gazing at the islands and the lighthouse, not sorry to enjoy a little rest after a hard day's work. Dan, sauntering along the deck, stopped when he came up to him. "Having a rest at last, Martin, I suppose," he said, "and I'm sure we want it, after the hard work we've had the last few days; your father, the captain, knows how to keep men at work, there's no mistake about that."

"There isn't more work than I expected, Dan," said Martin.

"There's more than there is on board other ships I know, because I've been aboard of others myself. Well, I suppose we shall get a day or two's rest when we get into port."

"Most likely," said Martin; "but are you getting tired of the work already, Dan?"

"Tired? no, not a bit of it; I thought you might be, perhaps, being fresh to it, and being used to quite a young gentleman's life on shore. I'm accustomed to roughing it, you know; you, on the contrary" ——

"Nonsense, Dan," said Martin, indignantly, "what do you mean by my leading a young gentleman's life on shore?

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I was never idle there, I'm sure. You're the last one to talk about that sort of thing."

"Well, you see, I was cut out for a sailor, and sailors when on shore are well known to find it difficult to put their hands to any land work. Now you, on the contrary, as every one can perceive, were never made for a seaman."

This was said in a mocking, insolent tone; it was meant to wound Martin in a tender point, and did so. He replied angrily, "What right have you to say that, Dan? I'm much fitter for a sailor than you are, as we shall soon see. I don't believe any one ever perceived that I was not made for a seaman, except you."

"Didn't they just, when you had to go up to the main-top in the gale in the Bay, the first time? You trembled all over, and when you came down looked as white as a sheet," said Dan, contemptuously.

"You never saw me go up, for you were asleep in your berth at the time."

"Ah, but I was told about it by those who did, though," replied Dan, spitefully.

"I don't believe a word of it," said Martin, angrily, "and I wasn't a bit frightened, though it was the first time, and blowing hard, too."

"You'll find it hard to make any one who saw you believe you weren't frightened, Martin. Here comes Bill Tozer; I'll ask him."

With these words he hailed a sailor who was lounging along the deck, his pipe in his mouth, one of the most worthless of the new hands the "Diana" had shipped at Plymouth.

"I say, Bill, didn't you see this here chap, Martin, our captain's son, go aloft in the gale when we were in the Bay last Thursday, and didn't he get all of a tremble, so that he nearly fell off, and looked deadly pale, too, when he came down?"

"True enough, Dan, I saw it all, and the captain, too,

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staring hard aloft after him, looking nearly as scared as his son," replied the sailor, who, having a grudge against the captain, owing to the strict discipline which he insisted in maintaining, was glad enough to pay it off upon his son.

"It's a lie," said Martin, indignantly: "my father look scared indeed!"

"Do you think I'll stand being called a liar by a whipper-snapper like you?" cried Tozer in a passion, as he shook his fist in Martin's face.

"I don't care — it is a lie," repeated Martin, with determination.

"Take that, then," said the man, as he struck Martin a blow which sent him reeling along the deck, while the blood streamed down from his face.

But he rallied almost immediately, and springing like a tiger on his assailant, he exclaimed, "Coward! to strike a fellow not half your size; I'll pay you off though," and he aimed blow after blow upon Tozer, who was quite unprepared, not expecting that the boy would dare to return his attack.

Just at this moment the mate came up. He stood still with amazement, when he saw the captain's son, who had been regarded by the whole ship's company as a quiet, steady, inoffensive lad, somewhat of a milksop, too, engaged in a hand-to-hand scuffle with a big and muscular sailor.

"Stop that!" he cried; "no fighting allowed here, or I'll report you to the captain. Why, Martin, you're the last lad I should have expected to catch at this kind of thing; and Tozer, if you wanted to fight, you should have chosen some one of your own size," and he interposed between the combatants.

"It don't matter to me, sir, what size a fellow is; so long as he calls me a liar, I'll not stand it," replied Tozer, and he slunk away, muttering, "Never mind, I'll pay him off another time."

"Don't let me catch you at this game again, youngster,"

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said the mate to Martin, who made no reply, and turned off in another direction.

Martin's swelled face and black eye could not be concealed from the captain; however, he took no notice of it till he had an opportunity of speaking to the boy alone.

"How did you get in the wars, Martin?" he asked.

His son related the affair. "You had best pay no heed to what such fellows as Tozer say, Martin, but treat remarks of that kind with the indifference they deserve. What if you did feel a bit queer when you had to go to the mizzentop in the gale? Every one would the first time, and there's no disgrace in that, no more than there was in my feeling a little anxious myself and looking up after you, both quite natural to any one under the circumstances. You must try and stand chaff without losing your temper; you'll have enough of it to bear on board ship; it's best to take no notice of it, to go on doing your duty, and showing you don't mind it, and then in time they'll leave off bothering you."

"Dan's at the bottom of it all, father," said Martin; "so long as we were on shore and he could get anything out of me, he was friendly enough, but all that's changed now. I wish you'd never taken him with you."

"Why, you asked me to, Martin! I was rather loth to it myself, you must remember."

"Yes, father, that's true, I begged you to take him, mostly for Kate's sake, and then he made so many fine promises, too."

"There's been no fault to find with him so far, Martin; he does his work fairly enough, and I don't understand his showing such a spite against you."

"Neither do I, father, but it only shows what an ungrateful chap he is. Ashore he was always bothering me for something; often when he's been half starving, as he said, I've given him my last sixpence. I hoped when I went to sea that I should have seen the last of him, but the day

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you came home on your last cruise he begged me to say a word for him, and then Kate backed him up, and much as I disliked it I couldn't refuse her. I thought, too, he really would turn over a new leaf this time. But now he's got mixed up with those few rough chaps he's turned against me like, because they suit him better."

"Well, what's been done can't be undone now, Martin," said the captain, "so we must make the best of it, and don't you get into any more scrapes with the men. Keep your temper, and don't mind what they say."

"I'll try to, father, but he's a rare scamp, that Tozer,—a brutal fellow, too, to strike me as he did."

While this conversation was taking place between father and son the "Diana" was sailing along close to the beautiful shores of Portugal; the huge convent of Mafra had just been passed, and the white houses and palaces of Cintra, surrounded by gardens and forests, were coming into sight. In a few hours now they would have entered the Tagus, and next morning would in all probability find them moored off Lisbon.

All was activity now on board—decks were washed, brass-work furbished up, paint applied to parts of the bulwarks which had been damaged by the gale. All hands were cheerful at the prospect of a few days in port; none looked forward to it with greater pleasure than Martin; it would be his first sight of foreign parts, and in anticipation he had almost forgotten the troubles of the last few days.

Passing the lofty headland of La Rocca, and rounding the fine cliffs which form the promontory to the north of the river, they reached the mouth of the Tagus soon after sunset, where they dropped their anchors till morning. At daybreak anchors were weighed, and with a steady breeze they proceeded up the magnificent river. Towns and villages studded the banks on either side, behind which rose beautiful ranges of hills and mountains. Belem, with

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its castle and fine church, was now passed, and very soon after the splendid city of Lisbon, rising from the water's edge on a series of lofty hills, in tier upon tier of brilliantly white buildings, glittering in the sunlight and reflected in the sparkling waters of the broad Tagus, which spreads out here to the size of a large lake, came into view. It was a striking spectacle, for Lisbon rivals Naples and Constantinople in the beauty of her situation.

Now the swarthy custom-house officers in their dark-green uniforms came on board, and made a thorough search through the vessel. The anchors were dropped, lighters came alongside, and all hands were busied in getting the cargo out of the hold. After sunset the mate and some of the men went on shore, but Martin and the other boys had still too much work to finish, and next day, too, they had not a moment to spare. Dan, meanwhile, had ceased annoying Martin; he seemed to have returned to his old manner, and treated him almost with deference. Whilst they were busy moving the cargo, he remarked to him that he felt now he had been quite wrong in supposing that he was not cut out for a sailor; on the contrary, some of the crew had passed the remark to him that they never saw a lad who took so quickly and easily to a seaman's duties as Martin. Tozer, too, had ceased scowling at him, and seemed to have forgotten his grudge against him. Martin, therefore, though he did not trust Dan, was more comfortable and happier than he had been during the whole voyage.

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CHAPTER VI.

MARTIN IN TROUBLE.

"No fort can be so strong,
No fleshly breast can armed be so sound,
But will at last be torn with battery long,
Or unawares at disadvantage found;
Nothing is sure that grows in earthly ground,
And who most trusts in arm of fleshly might,
And boasts in beauty's chain not to be bound,
Does soonest fall in disadventurous fight,
And yields his captive neck to victors most despight."

— SPENSER.

NEXT day was Sunday; the captain, as was always his custom when in port, told the crew that he would have no work done that day. The mate, a couple of men, and Tom Fowler were told off to remain on board to guard the ship and cargo, the rest were at liberty to go on shore if they liked. The captain expressed his intention of going to church, inviting those of the men who were willing to accompany him. Three decided to do so. Accordingly, soon after nine o'clock, they, together with the captain and his son, rowed ashore and landed at the steps opposite the custom-house. Thence they passed into the magnificent square close by, its dazzling white buildings contrasting with the black equestrian statue in the centre. All was new and strange to Martin. The streets were crowded with people in their Sunday-best, peasants in quaint and gay costumes, soldiers and officers in showy uniforms, water-carriers bearing their huge earthen jars on their heads, fishermen with large flat trays suspended from either shoulder full of strange and various fish, which with shrill cries they offered for sale, girls and women selling

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flowers and fruits, the shops, small but brilliant with jewelry, all open, the tram-cars and omnibuses overflowing with pleasure-seekers — presenting a striking contrast to an English Sunday. The British seamen walked up the long straight streets with their noble, palatial-looking houses, till they reached the beautiful gardens of the Estrella, with its large trees, rare shrubs, and plants, gay flowers and shady walks. Passing through this, and ascending the hill beyond, they reached the English cemetery, with its long rows of gloomy cypresses, entwined by scarlet geraniums, at the further end of which stands the English church.

The service was as plain as the building in which it was conducted, and Martin missed the hearty chanting and hymn-singing to which he was accustomed at home, but the prayers and hymns were all the same; the men joined warmly enough in them, and they thought, as they sang, of their loved ones across the sea, who were singing the same hymns and joining in the same prayers to the One Eternal Father, who listens to the suplications of all His children for themselves and each other, however widely they may be parted asunder. The sermon, earnest and practical, was attentively listened to by the captain and his son.

The service over, they retraced their steps towards the banks of the river. The captain wished to return to his ship, two of the men proposed going to a sailors' home and reading-room somewhere in the city, the other was going to look up a mate belonging to another vessel. Martin, desirous to remain on shore some time longer, as the "Diana" was to sail very soon, and there would be no other opportunity of seeing the city, asked his father if he might stay.

"I've no objection, Martin, but you'd better keep with Bill Taylor, or go with the other men to the Sailors' Home; you might lose your way strolling about alone, and as you can't speak their language would not be able to ask it. Mind you don't stay later than sunset. If our boat's not

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alongside the steps, whistle for her; I'll be on the look-out; and take care you don't get into bad company."

"All right, father, I'll take good care of myself," said Martin, "and I'll be down at the steps long before sunset; in two or three hours' time I shall have seen enough of the place, and be glad enough to come on board."

They parted, and Martin kept with his shipmate till the latter met his friend, who invited him to come on board his vessel to spend the afternoon. Martin was thus left alone, and not by his own choice; he didn't mind himself, for he felt sure he would not lose his way, but he thought his father might be vexed with him for not following his advice. He determined to climb the hill to the citadel, which he had noticed as a conspicuous object from the river, and whence there must be a very fine view. The streets he passed through were narrow and winding, the houses large and lofty. He looked into the curious old cathedral, and gazed with interest at the large prison close by, its thickly barred windows crowded with criminals in convict-dress looking out for their friends in the street below. Then a steep and winding climb brought him to the gate of the citadel; he passed in unchallenged by the sentry, and found himself in an enclosure laid out as a garden; from the broad parapet which nearly surrounded it was a magnificent view over the whole city, the beautiful country around, the distant mountains, and the broad Tagus, its glittering waters covered with craft of every size, rig, and nation, among which he easily distinguished the "Diana."

Having chosen a shady spot, he was leaning over the parapet enjoying the prospect, when he felt himself familiarly clapped on the shoulder, and turning quickly round, he recognized Dan, who exclaimed, "You here, Martin, and all alone! who would have thought it? you went off with the captain and the rest to church this morning, didn't you?"

"Yes, Dan," he replied, "but the service has been over the last half hour."

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"Well, with such a jolly place as this to roam about in, I wouldn't have lost any of my time in church," said Dan scornfully, "but every one to his own taste, of course; and what are you up to now, Martin?"

"I shall look about the city for another hour or so, and then go on board again, Dan," he answered.

At that moment Tozer and two other men appeared in the background; they had hitherto been looking over on the other side of the citadel.

"Come along with us, Martin," said Dan; "you'll soon get tired of your own company. We'll have some fun together."

"No, thank you," said Martin, somewhat hesitatingly. He felt it would be more cheerful to go with his shipmates, but he remembered his father had warned him not to get into bad company, and he thought, too, of the text from which Mr. Newberry had preached on the Sunday evening before he left Plymouth: "If sinners entice thee, consent thou not." Dan's three companions were the worst among the "Diana's" crew.

"Nonsense, Martin," said Dan, "don't be so proud and unforgiving. It's all along of what I said the other day, which put you out of temper, and set you and Tozer a-fighting like two dogs. I told you I made a mistake, and was sorry for it, and I don't believe Tozer owes you any grudge either, now."

"Hallo, Martin, you there!" said Tozer, coming up and winking at Dan, slyly. "You'll join us, won't you?"

"No," said Martin, "I'd rather not, I'm going back to the ship. I'm getting hungry now and want some dinner."

"Nonsense, boy," replied Tozer, patting him familiarly on the back, "don't be a fool; you don't think I'm such a brute as to cherish that old grudge of last week; I was out of temper, — perhaps I'd reason to be, and so had you; I'm convinced now that you're a thoroughly plucky fellow, and

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I'm not so bad as some people paint me; come, make it up and let's be friends!"

He held out his hand. Martin could not help doing the same, and shook it warmly; so far well, but Tozer continued: "Now, my boy, come and have a bit of dinner with us; we'll stand treat; Smith here knows of a first-rate eating-shop, kept by an Englishwoman, and it's there we mean to go at once."

"Thank you, Tozer," replied Martin, in a very indecisive tone; "but I think I'd best go on board."

"No, no, my boy, don't be so obstinate and unfriendly; come and have a bit of something with us first, and then if you like, when we go to the garden to hear the music afterwards, you can go on board; the shop we're going to is close to the shore."

"Yes, come along, Martin," said Dan, as he took him by the arm, "if it's only just to show that you've made it up with us."

"Very well," he said reluctantly, "but as soon as we've had something to eat, I must go on board."

"All right! all right!" said Tozer, in which his companions joined, and then all five rapidly descended the hill towards the heart of the city.

Smith, who had several times been to Lisbon before, was acquainted with one of those disreputable haunts for entrapping and ruining English seamen, which, often kept by the most degraded of our countrymen or countrywomen, are to be found in most foreign ports frequented by British ships. In these dens vice parades itself with unblushing effrontery, drinking and gambling are carried on all day long; innocent seamen who are unhappily enticed hither rarely leave without being robbed, cheated, and sometimes even drugged. It is to counteract the evil influences of these detestable shops that "Sailors' Homes" are now established so widely, by the benevolent, in foreign ports.

They turned into a wide street, one side of which was

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full of fish and fruit shops, marine stores, establishments where ropes, cordage, nautical instruments were sold; on the other side were a row of irregular dilapidated buildings, low one-storied houses, their backs looking on to the river; most of these were wine and spirit shops, here and there a restaurant or eating-house; before each stood chairs, benches and tables, where a noisy set of sailors of all nations sat drinking. Smith led the way to one of these, over the door of which was written, "Mrs. Brady's English Eating-House. Wines, Spirits, Best Cordial Gin. Good Beds."

A couple of English sailors were sitting outside, drinking beer and smoking long clay pipes. An odor of greasy cooking, mixed with stale smoke, greeted their nostrils, as the men entered the dirty parlor, where they were welcomed by an old blear-eyed hag, tawdrily dressed, but repulsively dirty.

"Good morning, gentlemen," she said; "what can I do for you to-day?"

"Glad to see you again, Mrs. Brady," said Smith. "It's long since we met. I have brought a lot of our chaps from the 'Diana' to have a bit of dinner at your place, some of 'em young hands, who'd like to see a little of Lisbon life, and taste some of your rare port-wine, too," and he winked at the landlady, and then at Tozer.

"I'm always glad to see my countrymen; you're very welcome, gentlemen. I've got a nice joint of beef just ready. Will you have it in here, or outside?"

"Oh, outside," cried Tozer; "it's stuffy enough in here; besides, we shall see what's going on in the street,— there'll be much more fun; put a table out there, missis, and some chairs, — mind you bring some of your best wine, too, — but I'll have a glass of gin to begin with."

She went to fetch the gin, which Tozer swigged at one draught. The table and chairs were soon put outside, and several bottles of wine placed on the table. The ordinary

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wine of Lisbon is very heady and strong, resembling port; the natives, however, are remarkably temperate, and one seldom sees a Portuguese the worse for drink.

Martin already deeply repented his weakness and folly in joining Dan and his companions; he could see plainly enough now that this was not a fit place for him to be in. What would his father think if he saw him now sitting before this haunt of vice amid the scum of the ship's crew, listening to their oaths and filthy jests, and this on Sunday, too, a day which he had always been in the habit of spending at home in church and school, with an occasional stroll on the Hoe, or a quiet afternoon walk in the country? But he had not the courage now to tear himself away from his bad companions. What would have been comparatively easy half an hour ago was far more difficult now. He was afraid of their mockery and laughter; he felt he was a coward, his conscience told him so — told him, too, that he had been walking in the way of sinners and sitting in the seat of the scornful; was he not, alas! going on the broad road which leadeth to destruction?

Once, indeed, his sense of right and propriety was so shocked by something one of the men said that he almost sprung from his seat and fled away, but cowardly fear kept him rooted to the spot. He had once given way to the tempter, and now he was too strong for him, and Martin did not, as he had been taught by his good parson at home, call upon One who was stronger than Satan to deliver him from his power, by giving him strength to resist the wiles of the evil one. In fact, he yielded still more to them; he persuaded himself that now he was in for it he must make the best of it, keep on good terms with his shipmates as long as the meal lasted, and then make his way back to the ship as quietly as possible, of course concealing from his father what had occurred.

But Martin was reckoning without his host, as the sequel will prove.

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"Walking about in this hot season and climbing that steep hill makes one very dry," said Smith, as he poured out a tumbler of wine and drank it off.

The other men followed his example. Tozer poured out a tumbler for Martin, remarking, "You must be thirsty and tired, my lad; that wine will do you good."

Martin was thirsty, certainly; he would far rather have had a glass of lemonade, or even water, but he feared that if he refused the wine, a laugh would be raised against him. Not having resisted the temptation at first, he easily gave away when it was repeated under a different form. Moreover, there is nothing so difficult to endure as ridicule, so he drained the glass; Dan did the same, the men immediately replenishing the glasses.

As they had to wait some time for their meal, the wine circulated pretty freely. Martin's appetite was nearly gone when the joint arrived; the greasy, sodden meat, the dirty knives, forks, and plates, did not improve it. But Dan and the other men ate heartily, their spirits too rose rapidly, they became very noisy and boisterous, swearing constantly, uttering the coarsest jokes and most blasphemous expressions, at which Martin more than once shuddered, never having yet heard the like, as fear of the captain had hitherto prevented these men from using such utterly vile language on board the "Diana."

But the more the wine got into Martin's head, the less was his sense of religion and propriety shocked by the words and actions of his shipmates. He even smiled now at some of their jokes, his head felt in a whirl; he seemed scarcely to know where he was, or what he was about.

When the meal was finished more wine was called for; the men lighted their pipes and continued drinking for another hour. Martin was beginning to be quite at home with his company. One of the men remarked that it was time to be moving, if they wanted to have a stroll in the

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public gardens, where everybody went on Sunday afternoon, and where the military band played.

"All right," said Smith, "we'll start at once," and he called the landlady.

"Missis," he said, "we're coming here again to-night before we go on board to have a drop of something; you'll trust us till then, won't you?"

"Surely, Mr. Smith, you and I are old friends," replied the hag, winking at Smith; "you can pay your score when you come back. I suppose all these gentlemen will come with you."

"Yes, yes; we're all coming back," said Tozer; "we mean to make a day of it."

Martin raised a feeble protest.

"I'd better go back to the ship now," he said.

"Nonsense, Martin," replied Dan; "you're happy enough with us, I'm sure; what's the good of moping on board? You'll have enough of the ship the next few weeks, I assure you. Come along with us now to the gardens."

"I should like to be on board by sunset," said Martin.

"By sunset, of course," added Tozer; "so shall we all, I expect; but that's several hours off."

Martin made no further objection; in fact, he preferred now going with his shipmates. So they all rose from their seats and left the eating-house.

The strong wine, to which he was so unaccustomed, had got into Martin's head: he could scarcely walk straight. Dan was even worse, for he had drunk a great deal more. Arm-in-arm the five British seamen reeled along the streets of Lisbon, the natives turning to look at them with ridicule and contempt. To the shame of our countrymen it was not an unusual spectacle; all knew from their condition to what nation they belonged.

Passing through the fine and curiously paved square of the Rocio, they came to the public gardens, laid out in flower-beds and shady walks, with here and there fountains

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and statues. It was thronged with gayly dressed people of all classes; many soldiers were mingled with the crowd, a military band was playing in the centre of the garden; on chairs and benches around, crowds were sitting, enjoying its lively strains. Here the men sat, too, for some time, making themselves conspicuous by their rude and noisy behavior. As the effects of the wine on Martin began to wear away, he felt ashamed of himself. He was vexed at being in such disgraceful company. How would he feel if he were seen reeling about the Hoe, at Plymouth, with such men as these? Surely, the fact was the same, though the place was different. Sharp pangs of conscience again made themselves felt. How he had fallen: forgotten his father's warnings, the kindly admonitions of his parson at home!

"Ah!" he thought, "how right Mr. Newberry was to warn me against being led astray by bad companions! How foolish was my self-confidence!" He got up from his seat, suddenly. "I am going on board now," he said; "I've had enough of this; good-by, mates."

"No, no," said Dan; "you're not going yet, Martin; let's all go back together. You don't mean to stay much longer, do you, Tozer?"

"Only to hear one more tune, and then we'll all be going," was the reply.

Martin yielded again, to his own cost. He felt he would have a terrible struggle to get away, and as the men really seemed as if they meant to go soon, a few minutes could make no difference. After two more tunes had been played, and the men perceived that Martin was getting restless, Smith proposed that they should move on somewhere else. They all got up and strolled back into the streets. They had spent much longer time in the gardens than Martin had imagined; he perceived to his regret and dismay that the sun was already setting.

"We must go and pay our score at Smith's friend's on the Quay," said Tozer, "before we go on board."

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"Yes, and liquor up, too," replied Smith.

Martin, eager to get back to the ship, now foresaw more delay, but, walking arm-in-arm as he was between Tozer and Dan, he dared not raise any objection to this second visit to the drinking-shop. It was already getting dusk when they reached it, and there were lights in the windows. The parlor was full of English sailors, all more or less intoxicated, singing, shouting, and quarrelling, and enveloped in such a cloud of tobacco smoke that it was scarcely possible to see across the room, small as it was.

"Good-evening, Mrs. Brady; here we are, back again," said Smith. "You've got a lot of our countrymen inside enjoying themselves, I see."

"Yes, Mr. Smith, and you and your friends will join them, no doubt," she replied, with a cunning leer.

"By all means, if they can make room for us."

"Come in, the whole lot of you," cried one of the sailors, who was an acquaintance of Tozer; "the more the merrier. We'll make room for you."

"Thank you, mates, — that's right," said Tozer. "Make haste, missis, bring us some glasses and some grog."

When the landlady left the room to fetch them, Smith followed her into the passage, and they whispered together for a few minutes, Smith putting something into her hand. When he came back he observed to the others, "I've paid Mrs. Brady what we owe; you can settle it with me afterwards. You'll only have to pay now for this 'ere drink."

Martin was very thirsty, the natural result of the strong wine he had taken for dinner; the close, smoky atmosphere of the crowded room increased his craving for drink. Five glasses of grog were placed before the men. When Martin put the liquor to his lips it tasted like fire, and seemed to burn his throat. Dan observed this, and winked at Tozer, who remarked to Martin, —

"You don't seem to relish that grog, my lad."

"No, that I don't; it's just like fire," and turning to the

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landlady, who was standing close by, "Bring me a glass of water, please."

"A glass of water!" roared Tozer, with a burst of mocking laughter, which attracted the attention of all present. "We don't drink water here, youngster; you've got into the wrong shop for that. Why, you must be a teetotaller!"

Martin turned crimson with shame and vexation; he saw he had become the laughing-stock of the whole assembly.

The old hag said, in hypocritical tone, "Our water here is very bad, sir; I can't recommend it."

"Bring me some wine, then," said Martin, in a loud, excited voice, "and be quick about it. I want to go on board my ship," and he glanced angrily at Dan and Tozer.

"Come, come, Martin, don't get out of temper. I see you're not a teetotaller; besides, we all have our tastes, and I forgot you drank wine for dinner, or I shouldn't have called you one," said Tozer.

"You seem to have got a very short memory," said Martin, curtly.

Tozer cast an angry glance at Martin, and was about to reply, when Smith nudged him, and at the same time the landlady put a large tumbler of very dark wine on the table before Martin. Thirsty as he was, defiant and irritated by the ridicule of his companions, he seized the glass and drank it off at one draught. It was a thicker and more luscious fluid than the wine he had drank for dinner, and left an unpleasant taste in his mouth.

Immediately after he rose from his seat, and was making for the door, when Tozer seized him by the arm, saying, "Stop a bit, stop a bit, young chap; let's all go on board together."

"I've stopped long enough to please you," said Martin, in an angry tone, "and now I mean to go."

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"No, no," said Dan, persuasively, dragging him back to his seat; "just let me finish this, and I'll go along with you — 'pon my word of honor."

"You've got to pay for that 'ere wine, too," said Smith. "We didn't promise to stand treat for more than dinner."

Martin began to fumble in his pockets; he had about a sovereign about him in loose cash, for he had some advanced pay given to him at Plymouth before sailing; but his head became dizzy, he felt utterly stupefied, he got up, but could not stand, and staggered down again on to his chair. A few minutes after he sank on the ground completely unconscious.

Tozer chuckled with delight, Dan burst into a loud laugh.

"I didn't think we should have caught the fellow so easily," said the former. "How well he fell into our trap. Won't the captain be in a rage with him? Ah! I shall have my revenge."

"Yes, indeed," replied Dan, "and his father will be awfully vexed at his sober son, whom he thinks a regular saint, keeping company with such a loose lot as us, and getting drunk, and on a Sunday, too, into the bargain. Ah! we shall be paying off the captain nicely now for all the hard work he has given us."

More grog was brought: no one took any further notice of Martin. Some of the other men in the parlor, however, cried "Shame!" and said "they didn't see any fun in such cowardly goings on. If they'd got a grudge against the lad, they'd much better have it out by giving him a good thrashing, if he'd been cheeky, and if they'd any fault to find with their captain, they weren't obliged to stay on board his ship." High words followed, which were continued in the streets and along the quays, as they returned to their respective ships.

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CHAPTER VII.

A HOPELESS SEARCH.

"To wilful men,
The injuries that they themselves procure
Must be their schoolmasters."
— KING LEAR.

"Comfort's in heaven, and we are on the earth,
Where nothing lives but crosses, care, and grief."
— RICHARD II.

No sooner had Captain Archer returned on board the "Diana" than he began to reflect that he had been wrong in leaving Martin on shore. When Taylor found his friend Martin would be thrown on his own resources, he might lose his way among the maze of narrow, winding streets, or be entrapped by some of the sharpers who, in ports like Lisbon, are generally on the watch for innocent and ignorant English sailors. He thought of going on shore again to look for his son, but felt that in such a large place as Lisbon it would not be of much use; so he consoled himself by trusting in Martin's steady character, and in his promise to come on board early, and certainly before sunset.

But as the afternoon wore on, he began to feel anxious: the boy surely must have lost his way somewhere. Then he bethought him that not having dined he would be hungry, and perhaps had gone into one of the low, disreputable eating-shops by the water-side, and got robbed; or had he fallen in with some of his dissolute shipmates, and could he be spending the time with them? This was not at all

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likely, for he had warned Martin against bad company; he knew, too, that he had no taste for it; and as he and the more disreputable of the crew were not on good terms, it was not likely that they would seek each others' society. In anxious suspense he paced the deck; in every boat which left the quay he imagined he saw Martin; every sound which fell on his ear he fancied at first was his son's whistle. He took out his telescope to try if he could see him on one of the wharves; but all in vain.

The sun had now set: it was getting dark; the mate and a number of the men, who had been on shore all the afternoon, came on board, and the captain eagerly asked them if they had seen anything of his son. They replied in the negative. The suspense was intolerable, but there was nothing to do but wait on. He hoped that the lad had only lost his way, and had thus been detained; he prayed God that it might be no worse. It had grown quite dark now, and the outlines of the vast city could only be distinguished by the bright rows of gas-lamps, and by the lights burning in the windows of the houses. Here and there a moving speck on the water showed the lamp of a boat, but none approached the "Diana"; each, when it seemed to be nearing, turned off in a different direction. "Are all hands on board?" he called out to the mate, a little before ten o'clock. "No, sir," was the reply; "there are four ashore, besides your son."

When he heard their names he knew that they were the least trustworthy and most rascally of the crew. What if they had persuaded Martin to join them? It seemed hardly likely. But where, then, could the boy be?

About half-past ten he heard a whistle; it was repeated: he knew it was the signal for the cutter to go on shore to fetch some one of the crew on board. This was Martin, surely. He sent two men in the boat to the quay immediately. It seemed an age before they returned. He heard the sound of the oars in the water, while mingled with it

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shouts of laughter and loud oaths fell upon his ear. The occupants of the boat were evidently drunk; he could hardly wish Martin to be in such company.

As the cutter approached the ship, he gazed eagerly over the side, straining his eyes to recognize the figures in the boat. He distinctly saw six only; one was missing, then: could it be his son?

That such was the case he was soon convinced when the boat came alongside. The men had no little difficulty in scrambling on board, so much were they the worse for drink. When they reached the deck they could scarcely walk without reeling or staggering. The captain was very angry; he seized Dan by the arm, and held him back.

"Tell me, you young rascal," he said, "have you seen anything of Martin?"

He seemed almost too drunk to understand or reply; a tighter grasp of the captain's strong hand upon his arm, and a violent shake, however, brought him a little to his senses. Archer repeated the question.

"Martin — no, sir," he stuttered; "he's not one likely to seek our company."

"You've been drinking heavily, you young vagabond," said the captain in a loud, angry tone, "and you're all of you the worse for liquor," he continued, turning towards the other men, but they had all vanished into the forecastle.

Whether Dan really had seen Martin, whether he knew what had become of him or not, the captain could not discover; he stubbornly denied all knowledge of him; so after fruitless questionings he was allowed to go to his berth.

The captain was now at his wits' end: what could have become of the boy? what means must he take to discover him? He again paced the deck, then he called up the mate.

"Hamilton," he said, "what do you think can have happened to that boy of mine? He promised to come on board before sunset; I've never known him break his

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word or disobey me before; he's always been quiet and steady at home, and not one likely to get into any scrape or mischief."

"Well, sir, it's my opinion that Tozer and his mates know pretty well what's become of him," was the reply. "Tozer has a grudge against Martin, I know, and I've heard him express it freely enough. Dan knows, too, only he daren't peach, and we sha'n't get anything out of them. They're sworn to silence, you may be sure, sir."

"I can't think my young chap would ever have joined them of his own accord, Hamilton."

"It don't seem likely, certainly, sir, but they may have got round him somehow or other. He may perhaps have lost his way, and got decoyed into some villainous den such as abound along the water-side, and been robbed or drugged."

"They'd never rob a boy like that, surely; he's nothing about him that's worth having, not even a watch."

"You forget, sir, his clothes alone would be good plunder to many of those land-sharks. It wouldn't be the first case of the kind I've heard of."

"Good heavens! Hamilton," cried the captain, "you make me more anxious than ever; what is to be done?"

"We can do nothing till morning, sir; to search for the boy in Lisbon during the night would be like looking for a needle in a bundle of hay. To-morrow we must apply early to the English consul, and the police."

"Yes, of course, but I shall go on shore at sunrise; meanwhile I must keep watch in case he should turn up. Good-night, Hamilton," he said, sadly.

He retired into his cabin, shut the door and sat down with his arms resting on the table, his head in his hands. He was full of trouble and perplexity. This trial, as so often happens, had come upon him suddenly and unexpectedly. The boy was so steady he never thought he was likely to get into trouble, but when he reflected he remem-

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bered how high-spirited he was, how he had resented Tozer's insult, who was likely enough to take any opportunity of revenge, when he had the chance. He had been looking forward for years to the happy time when he should have his son with him on his voyages, and now that his wish was realized, he was in greater anxiety about him than he had ever been when the wide seas parted them by thousands of miles. He knelt down and prayed fervently to God to guard the lad wherever he might be, to deliver him from the dangers to which he was exposed, and to bring him back to him in safety. Then he took out his Bible and Prayer-book, the well-worn volumes which had been his companions on his many voyages, the sources from whence he had so often drawn strength and consolation in dark hours of trial; he read again the Psalms and lessons for the day: he found in them passages which seemed to speak comfort to his troubled soul. He looked back upon his past life — a hard one it had been, indeed, — the greater part of it lived on the treacherous deep, uncheered by human sympathy, but sustained by a firm trust in an ever-watchful and ever-loving Saviour, in a consciousness of duty done to Him to the best of his ability. His home had been made desolate, wife and children had been taken from him, and though he had at first been well-nigh crushed by the blow, and almost tempted to mistrust the love of his Father in heaven, he had been led at last to feel that whom the Lord loveth He correcteth, and that all must eventually work together for good to those who love and trust in Him. On the one now left to him all his affections and hopes were concentrated; he was never absent from his thoughts, never forgotten in his prayers. To the watchful care of his Father in heaven, Stephen Archer confided the lad; surely God, who had so far faithfully and mercifully watched over his son, would not now abandon him — He whose tender mercies are over all His works would never turn a deaf ear to a father's prayer for his only son exposed to unknown dangers.

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Cheered and comforted he rose from his knees and returned to the deck. The great city lay in deep silence: scarcely a sound was to be heard, except the pacing of the sentinels outside the custom-house and other government buildings. The stars shone out brightly, while the lights of the ships at anchor in the Tagus sparkled as they were reflected in the glassy waters of the river.

Morning had come. The sun, already high in the heavens, was pouring his fierce rays, so far as was possible, through the window-panes, thick with dust and smoke, of the dirty eating-house by the side of the Tagus. The room so full of noisy drunken seamen the night before seemed to be empty now; there were traces enough of the evening's carouse: everything was in confusion, benches and chairs were overturned, the glasses and bottles still remained on the tables, the unswept floor was strewn with broken pipes and ashes. However, the apartment had an occupant, for lying in the corner, his face to the floor, was the figure of a boy, who appeared from his dress to belong to the lowest grade of society; he was sound asleep, breathing heavily, groaning, too, every now and then as if in pain. He was clothed in nothing but a ragged shirt and a thin pair of blue linen trousers full of holes, he wore neither shoes nor stockings, his thick light hair was unkempt and matted.

Suddenly he gave a start, with a strong effort roused himself, sat up and looked vacantly round the room. He seeemed still like one in a dream: he put his hands to his forehead, shook himself, rubbed his eyes; then glancing down at his bare feet and at the rags in which he was clothed, he started up with a cry of horror, and then sank down again on the floor, burying his face in his hands, and seeming as if endeavoring to collect his thoughts.

"Where am I?" he cried, as he again looked round the wretched place; "am I still dreaming, or am I really awake? Yes, I must be awake. I begin to remember now

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—but oh! my head, my head!" and he put his hands again to his burning brow, "and my father and the ship—where can I be? and these filthy clothes—how do I come by them, and where are my own? shoes and stockings, too, gone—oh! what have I done? who would ever have thought I should have come to this!" and the poor lad burst into a paroxysm of tears.

The boy was none other than Martin Archer, whom we left on the previous evening in the midst of those evil companions from whom he had not the courage to break loose; he had paid the penalty of his folly bitterly enough, poor fellow, for he had been betrayed into an infamous den of thieves and sharpers. The wine which the old woman had set before him the previous night had been well drugged, so that before his shipmates left the wretched tavern Martin was completely stupefied. Amid the jeers and scoffs of the whole company he had rolled down on the floor, where Tozer and Smith had bestowed on him numerous kicks, as the former said, to pay off his old grudge, and the latter as a substitute for his surly father, the captain. They had arranged all with the landlady beforehand. Martin was to be drugged and left behind, and she and her associates were to take possession of his clothes and any money he had about him in payment for the refreshments of which the men had partaken—for not one farthing had Smith really paid the old woman. Accordingly, as soon as these brutal fellows had left, and the room was cleared of all the company except Martin, the hag, accompanied by her son and daughter, the latter being more Portuguese than English, her husband having been of that nation, entered, and finding the boy in a complete state of insensibility, stripped him of all his clothes, and put on him the miserable rags in which he found himself when he awoke in the morning. They then locked the door hurriedly and retired to another part of the house. Their intention had been to drag him out of doors and leave him

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lying in some corner of the street, where, as it is the habit of vagabonds and beggars in those southern climes to pass the night lying on doorsteps or on the pavement, he would have attracted no particular notice. But it so happened that, their neighborhood possessing a very evil repute, and having been especially noisy that evening, the street was patrolled by four policemen during the whole night, and this obliged the miscreants to be cautious, and how Martin was to be got rid of they were obliged to leave for the present undecided. His clothes, however, were to be disposed of as speedily as possible — the daughter was to carry them off at dawn to a purchaser of such property in another part of the city.

As Martin had some fifteen shillings in his pocket, and as his clothes were new and good, the thieves had done a profitable night's work, and chuckled over their gains. When at daybreak the young woman left the house with the bundle of clothes, Martin was immersed in the deep, unhealthy slumber caused by the drug administered to him the previous evening.

He was now thoroughly aroused. Slowly, one by one, all the events of yesterday came vividly before his mind. With shame and bitter sorrow he remembered how easily he had yielded to temptation; he felt what a coward he had been to allow himself to be influenced by such a lad as Dan, and to be intimidated by a fellow like Tozer. Of neither of them had he been afraid on board ship, as he had already proved, but yesterday he had fallen before a more subtle form of temptation — the fear of ridicule. How he could have been such a coward he could hardly understand now he came to look back upon it. He had disobeyed his father, too, for the first time in his life. What would he think of him after this? he would surely never trust him again. What an anxious night, too, he must have caused him! Then came other and still more solemn thoughts,— he remembered his last conversation

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with the good parson at home, only a fortnight ago, how he had warned him against self-confidence, how lightly he had held these admonitions, and how certain he had felt that no insult, mockery, or ridicule could make him swerve from the right path. He learned now for the first time, like so many others, that we are sent out into the world to gain experience by hard lessons, till we find out our ignorance and weakness, and that we are utterly unable to stand alone against the power of the evil one. Martin had trusted entirely to himself; he had never prayed for help to resist the temptation when it first met him, or for the Spirit's guidance to choose the right way; he had made the first false step in consenting to go with his ungodly shipmates; this forced him into others, each worse than the preceding, for when a man begins to do wrong he never can answer for himself how far he may be carried onward, — one evil concession requires another, and thus Martin was led at last into the degrading sin of drunkenness.

But now, like the prodigal, as well in his deep penitence as in his state of degradation, "he came to himself," he poured out his heart to his Father in heaven, confessing his sin and his weakness, and imploring His forgiveness. He loathed himself for what he had done yesterday, he humbled himself in the dust before his God. Sad as his present state was, uncertain and gloomy as seemed the future, it was only of the bitter and irrevocable past that he now thought.

His brow ached and burned. He was stiff and bruised by the kicks and blows he had received when unconscious last night. When he rose from his knees he felt, however, somewhat easier in his mind, because he had poured his sad tale of sin and woe into the sympathizing heart of Him who can make that sympathy perceptible to those who truly and earnestly turn to Him. He staggered to the door, and glanced down at the ragged clothing which

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"At last it yielded to his efforts." — Page 81.

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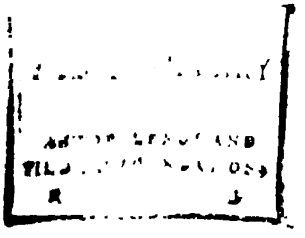

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hung loosely upon him. How could he show himself in the streets or venture to stand before his father in so filthy a state? But he could not remain where he was; he went to the door. It was locked; he shook it with all his strength, but to no purpose,—he was a prisoner, then. He threw himself down on the ground again, in an agony of despair.

In a few minutes he arose; he must escape if possible: anything would be better than confinement in this wretched tavern,—a place which only reminded him of his sin and cowardice. He approached the window,—yes, he thought he could get out of that, but he shrank from appearing in the crowded street in his present condition; how likely he would be to meet some of his shipmates, and if they recognized him how they would mock at and ridicule him!

Still, it was the only means of escape, and if he delayed to flee when he could, might not the people of the house detain him still longer as a prisoner? He must take his chance, then, and, if possible, find some place of concealment till nightfall, when he would return on board the "Diana," confess his sin, folly, and cowardice to his father, and willingly submit to any punishment he thought fit. The window was bolted and fastened; it took some time to open it, for he had to work as noiselessly as possible. At last it yielded to his efforts; as it opened wide, and being on the ground floor was level with the street, he sprang out in a moment. The old hag, who was looking out of an upper window at the time, saw him escape; she only laughed loudly. The owners of this den of thieves had accomplished their purpose, and had no wish to detain Martin; they had already received the money for his clothes.

The street was full of people, but as a ragged boy in the streets of Lisbon is not an uncommon sight, nobody heeded poor Martin, who gazed round like a frightened hare, and then took to his heels, turning down the nearest street,

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which was a narrow and somewhat gloomy one. In the middle of it he came to a church; the door was open, and beside it a number of beggars, quite as ragged and much filthier than himself, were crowding. Ah! he thought, here was a refuge indeed. He turned up the steps and entered the sacred edifice. The interior was spacious and lofty, a double row of columns extended down the nave, over the altar was a picture of the crucifixion, enclosed in a mass of tawdry gilding; on either side of the nave were a number of chapels, each containing an altar surmounted by a picture or sculptured image; before some of these lamps were burning. Worshippers were devoutly kneeling in many parts of the church, and some were sitting on the benches. There was a solemn calm here, which seemed at once to have a soothing influence upon poor Martin; all was quiet and peaceful; no one interfered with or took any notice of the sad-looking ragged boy, who knelt down at one of the benches, and prayed fervently that his sin of yesterday might be forgiven, and for the Spirit's aid that he might not again fall such an easy victim to the craft and subtlety of the tempter. He tried to repeat the Church's prayers which were suited to his case, and some of the hymns, too, and then he remembered that he had lost his prayer-book and hymn-book, which were in the pocket of his coat which had been stolen. Ah! he thought, if he had them now what a comfort they would be to him. Then he walked timidly round the church, for though it was nearly empty, and no one here was likely to recognize him, he could not repress the feeling of shame at his appearance. He looked intently at all the pictures, mostly of Scripture subjects; gaudy and ill-executed as most of them were, they deeply interested him, and he thought them the most beautiful he had ever seen. Thus hours passed away; his head still ached, he felt weary, too, and was beginning to get faint for want of food; he sat down on a bench in one of the side chapels, and fell fast asleep.

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The sun, like a brilliant ball of fire, was just appearing above the horizon, when Captain Archer, accompanied by one of the most trustworthy of his crew, rowed ashore. He had left the mate in charge of his ship, with strict orders not to allow Tozer, or any of his party of yesterday, to go on shore till his return.

Early as it was the streets of Lisbon were all astir when they landed. The captain, after his sleepless night of anxiety, looked worn and haggard, and now he had hardly made up his mind what measures to take to find his son. It was too early to go to the consulate, so he proposed that they should walk through the streets near the shore and along the wharves, keeping a sharp lookout on all sides for the boy. They passed through the very street where Martin at the time was immersed in his heavy narcotic slumber, and as the captain glanced at the many low taverns and wine-shops, and remarked the general disreputable look of the neighborhood, he said to his companion: —

"It strikes me, Williams, this is not at all an unlikely place for the boy to be lurking; these vile dens on either side are plainly enough the haunts of loose, dissolute sailors from ships of all nations. If what the mate thinks is the case, he may have been dragged into one of these taverns by Tozer and his set."

"Very probably, sir, but there are so many of them one doesn't know where to look; we should have to go to them all, and it wouldn't be easy to get information out of people whose interest it is not to give it," said his companion.

"Most of them, too, seem shut up. I don't see any one stirring," observed the captain.

"Yes, sir, when they keep it up so far into the night they're not likely to be moving very early in the morning."

They strolled backwards and forwards through the streets.

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Archer peered into some of the windows, but they were too begrimed with smoke and dust for him to see into the interior.

"Let's go on somewhere else, Williams," he said, "and come back here later, when the rogues are awake."

They walked along the wharves by the side of the Tagus, under the colonnades in Black Horse Square, up the fine straight street which leads to the Rocio, and into the bustling, crowded market-place, with its piles of fruit and vegetables, which was all alive at that early hour. Could the boy be loitering about here? The captain did not think it at all likely, and he determined now to go at once and see the English consul, who probably would be accustomed to such cases, and would advise him how to act.

The British consulate was some way off, and to reach it they had to pass through an old part of the town, with very lofty houses in narrow, winding streets. In one of these were a few shops, some for the sale of old iron and marine stores, or second-hand furniture, as well as one or two pawn and old-clothes shops. On passing one of the latter the captain started and stopped.

"Williams," he said, turning to his companion, "you may think me very foolish, but just look at that coat hanging in the window of that shop; it's just like Martin's."

"One blue coat's very much like another, sir," replied Williams; "still I don't wonder in your present state at your fancying anything, and there's no harm in our having a look at the coat to satisfy you."

On a nearer inspection the captain's suspicions were confirmed: it was just the size and cut of Martin's coat. The next step was to enter the shop and ask to look at it.

"Don't do anything to rouse their suspicions, sir," said Williams; "very likely they haven't come by it honestly, but we must not let them think we suppose so."

"You're right, my man, quite right," said the captain,

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trying to subdue his impatience and excitement; "just ask them quietly to let us have a look at the coat, as if we wanted to buy it."

"Very well, sir; I'll do my best," replied the sailor, as they went into the shabby shop.

It was kept by a Jewish couple, keen and sharp-eyed, who were then busily employed sorting a heap of clothes and rags which encumbered the floor, and hanging the best of them on pegs in the wall. The man, dressed in a shabby-genteel manner, and displaying a great deal of tawdry jewelry, scanned the two English seamen rather suspiciously, as if not quite certain whether they were victims about to fall into his clutches, or whether they had come to look for stolen property — a not uncommon occurrence.

Williams, with his hands in his pockets, walked carelessly into the shop, and gazed round, as if uncertain as to his wants. The captain followed him. The shopman came forward, grinning and rubbing his hands. These are victims, certainly, he thought. While Williams was still employed looking round the shop he was startled by an exclamation from the captain, which also roused the suspicion of the shopman, whose countenance at once changed.

"Look here, Williams," said Archer excitedly; "here are my boy's shirt and stockings, plainly enough, for here's his name marked on them; this is a clue, indeed, if we could only find out how these rogues came by them!"

"Not honestly, you may be sure, sir," replied Williams, who now went up to the window and put his hand on Martin's coat, which was hanging there, making a sign to the shopman to take it down.

He did not seem at all inclined to do this, but the determined aspect which the two Englishmen now assumed forced him to consent. It appeared now that he was able to speak a little broken English; shaking his head, and pointing at the coat, he said, —

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"For you — too small, too small."

"Never mind that," said the captain in a determined manner; "let's look at it."

"All right," said the Jew, as with some hesitation he took down the coat.

"Where did you get it from? How long have you had it?" asked the captain, as he took the coat out of his hand.

"Ver — good stuff, well for your boy," said the Jew, either not understanding, or pretending not to understand.

"Rogue! I asked you where you got it from? It was stolen, I know," cried Archer.

"Me — no thief — not stolen!" said the Jew, indignantly.

"Well! if you didn't steal it, where did you get it from, — and those stockings and shirt, too?" asked the captain, pointing to the other articles on the counter.

"That — not your affair," said the Jew sullenly; "you go away if you — no buy."

They could get no information out of the cunning shopman. But the captain was determined not to lose sight of such an important clue to the discovery of his son; he therefore proposed that Williams should remain in or near the shop, whilst he went to seek the help of the English consul.

Fortunately the consulate was not far off. When the captain had told his story, the consul informed him that his case was not a singular one. His son had probably fallen into the clutches of some of the disreputable dwellers in the low taverns by the river side, where he had been plundered even of his clothes. He would put the matter at once into the hands of the police, and have a search made for Martin; meanwhile one of his clerks should return with the captain to the shop; he being a Portuguese would probably manage to find out how they obtained the clothes, but there would be a difficulty in forcing them to

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give them up, as this could not be done unless the property was first proved to have been stolen.

When the Jewish couple, who had been not a little dismayed by Williams persistently remaining in the shop, saw the captain return in the company of the clerk from the consulate, who was well known to them, they were still more alarmed. However, at first they put a bold face on the matter, and said they had purchased the articles at an auction on board an English ship a week ago; but after the Portuguese official had threatened to send immediately for the police, unless they told the truth, they confessed that they had purchased the articles only a few hours ago from a young woman whom they described. As they knew it would take some time and trouble to prove that the articles had been stolen, no threat could make them give them up; so after a great deal of haggling the captain, by the clerk's advice, repurchased Martin's clothes for a sum much below their worth, though probably more than the Jews had given for them.

They next proceeded to the police office, where, after their Portuguese companion had stated the case, an immediate search and inquiry were promised, and the captain was told to call again in the evening. Before returning to the consulate the clerk accompanied the two Englishmen to the street in which was the scene of Martin's plunder and imprisonment. He visited with them several of the taverns and drinking-shops, and among them the identical den of thieves into which poor Martin had fallen. But nothing was to be got out of the people who kept it, and the captain's suspicions were not more aroused here than in any of the other haunts of vice which they entered. All day the distressed and anxious father walked through the streets of Lisbon, eagerly scanning every ragged object he met, half fearing, half hoping to recognize in him his son.

We left Martin asleep in the church. He was roused

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from his slumbers by a rough shake; looking up he saw a man in a shabby, threadbare cassock, who addressed him in a foreign tongue, of which he did not understand a word; by his signs and gestures, however, he perceived that he must leave the church. Twelve o'clock had struck, and it is the custom in southern countries to close most of the churches at that hour until four. Martin made his way to the door, followed by the sacristan, who locked it after him; he was thus suddenly deprived of his place of refuge, and found himself on the church steps in the blazing noon-day sun. The street was a narrow and unfrequented one; it led down to the water's edge; here was a boat-building yard, close to which several old boats, which either required or were past repair, were drawn up. Thither Martin sped, gazing timidly round, fearful of being recognized. Between two of the boats he found an excellent hiding-place, whence he could see the ships in the Tagus, among them the "Diana," which appeared but a short distance from the shore, while he was himself concealed by the hulls of the two old craft. His head still ached, and he was terribly hungry now, but there was no means of getting any food, and shame prevented him from showing himself in the streets or quays. He knew he well deserved the punishment which he was now suffering for his sins of cowardice and disobedience; he made up his mind to bear it patiently till nightfall, when he would seek out his father, and beg his forgiveness.

He would have a long time to wait there, he saw, when he looked up at the sun so high in the heavens; and how was he to find his father? He would be ashamed to raise the signal whistle for the "Diana's" boat to come and fetch him. What would his shipmates say to him in such a condition? How they would laugh and jeer at him! He had no money to hire a boat to take him to the ship. No, he knew what he would do. He gazed at the "Diana" and tried to measure her distance from the shore; it wasn't

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far. He was a good swimmer, and once had won a prize at a swimming match; he would swim on board, climb noiselessly up the bulwarks, and reach his father's cabin before any of the crew distinguished him in the darkness. This decision once come to, he felt more at ease; he curled himself up under the hull of the boat, and fell fast asleep again.

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CHAPTER VIII.

RESCUED.

"Sorely tried and sorely tempted,
From no agonies exempted,
In the penance of his trial,
And the discipline of pain:
Often by illusions cheated,
Often baffled and defeated
In the tasks to be completed,
He, by toil and self-denial,
To the highest shall attain."

—LONGFELLOW.

THE captain, after wandering all day through the streets of Lisbon, repaired again in the evening to the police office. As yet, he was informed, they had no clew to Martin's whereabouts. It was at night, when the low taverns and eating-shops were fullest, and when those who shrank from the light of day emerged from their haunts, that they would be more likely to obtain information. He was advised to come again next morning. The poor father, more downcast and desponding than ever, was full of all kinds of fears and terrible surmisings. He was certain that his son had been robbed and stripped, for he had got possession of his clothes. The dreadful thought now struck him that he might have been kidnapped by some foreign sailors and carried off to sea in a strange vessel, where he would suffer every possible ill-treatment, and perhaps never be heard of again. There was nothing to be done but to return on board the "Diana," where the mate expressed surprise and disappointment at his ill success. Archer communicated to him the last suspicion which had come into his mind.

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The mate said he did not believe that in these days such kidnapping would be possible, neither did there seem sufficient motive for it. In the last century, in the days of pirates and corsairs, it would have been likely enough. He did his best to cheer up the captain. "He will turn up sometime to-night or early in the morning, I feel certain, sir," he said. "The boy is too proud and has too much sense of shame to show himself, stripped as he is, probably clothed in some wretched rags, in the light of day; at night he will come out of his hiding-place."

"If I had only thought of that, Hamilton, I would have stayed ashore all night," said the captain.

"You most likely wouldn't have found him, sir. I expect he'll signal for the boat to fetch him some time to-night."

"I shall certainly be on the watch, Hamilton. Give orders to have the boat ready to put off at any moment."

"All right, sir."

The captain began to pace the deck with the same anxious feelings as on the preceding evening. But his fears had greatly increased since then. He dreaded lest he might have to leave Lisbon without having any tidings of his son, for the day after to-morrow he would be obliged to sail.

More than an hour had passed away: the outline of the city was again only discernible by the brilliant rows of gas-lamps; myriads of stars sparkled in the vault of heaven, the broad bosom of the river was dotted with the lights of vessels. The captain leaned over the bulwarks and listened intently to every sound: he heard nothing but the distant eum of voices or rattle of carriage-wheels in the city streets. Should he go on shore again and make another attempt to find his son? He was on the point of ordering the boat to carry out this intention when his quick ear heard a faint splashing in the water; it was hardly loud enough for the sound even of distant oars. He went to the

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stern and listened more intently. It was coming nearer, and was more distinct now — that it was some one swimming he became convinced. Could it be Martin? The boat must be launched at once. He called out to the man told off for that service, and who was holding himself in readiness to put off. In a moment he was in the boat. He told the man to row gently, while he steered in the direction whence the sounds proceeded. Every now and then they stopped to listen. The captain was convinced that some one was swimming: the strokes were not so regular as at first; and now they heard the deep breathing of the swimmer, who seemed to be getting exhausted. Suddenly there arose a cry of distress, followed by a splash; then the captain perceived, on the starboard of the boat, two outstretched arms and a pale face with closed eyes sinking down amid the waves. In an instant he recognized his son. He tore off his coat and boots and plunged into the water; he struck out boldly, and reached Martin only just in time to save him from sinking. The boat, which had followed, was alongside of them in a moment, and by the boatman's aid, with some trouble Martin was dragged on board. He was quite unconscious, having fainted from exhaustion, owing partly to want of food, partly to the swim having been much longer than he anticipated. He had slept for so long under the old hulk that it was quite dark when he awoke. He thought he had so exactly taken the bearings of the "Diana" that he would have no difficulty in swimming straight to her; so throwing off his rags he plunged into the water, and, committing himself to God's care and protection, swam boldly to a light which he imagined to be that of his father's ship. He soon perceived that he had miscalculated the distance; it was much further off than he had imagined. He felt that his strength was failing, he was already faint and exhausted; he must therefore make for the nearest ship, and ask to be taken on board till morning, but he became confused with the

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many lights around him, — each one that he made for seemed to recede as he approached it. Ah! he felt it was all over with him now; his last hour had come; he would find a watery grave beneath the dark waves of the Tagus. Here were the bitter fruits of his sin of yesterday; still, great as that sin had been, he knew that his repentance had been sincere and heart-felt, and that his Father above had for Jesus' sake accepted it: so he calmly committed himself into His hands, praying that if it were His will He would spare his life, but if not, that, pardoning his grievous offences, He would receive him into Paradise. At that moment he felt himself grasped by a strong arm, and immediately after lost all sense of consciousness till he revived some hours later and found himself lying in his father's berth in the captain's cabin, with the warm sun shining upon him.

His father was standing beside him, gazing at him. His features were worn and haggard, bearing evident traces of the anxiety he had experienced during the last two days. He looked stern and very sad, but said nothing. Martin burst into tears; he tried to speak, but his sobs choked his utterance.

Thankful as the captain felt to have his son once more with him, and to be relieved from the terrible anxiety which had oppressed him for the last twenty-four hours, yet he was inexpressibly grieved by his son's conduct; he had not only shown culpable weakness in yielding so easily to temptation, but he had broken his word and promise, so that he could never trust him fully again. It was not what he had expected of Martin: he had given him credit for greater firmness of character; he thought he was made of sterner stuff than to give way before the first blast of temptation. That he had sinned deeply he knew, but to what extent and in what manner he was of course ignorant till he had heard his story. That the boy had suffered already a heavy punishment for his misdeeds he was quite

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convinced; he did not intend, therefore, to chide or punish him further; till he had heard his own account of his fall he must suspend his judgment on the matter. He perceived that the boy was feverish and excited, and that quiet was needful for him, so he said kindly, — "Never mind, Martin, now; don't try to talk. I see you're tired and out of sorts; go to sleep, if you can; we will hear all about it another time."

With these words he turned away and left the cabin. They had greatly soothed poor Martin, who soon after again fell asleep. As next morning the "Diana" had to sail from Lisbon, this was a busy day on board, and the captain's time was fully occupied, for a large cargo was being taken in; all the crew were kept hard at work from early morning till late at night, and none were allowed to go on shore. The mate and Williams were the only men who knew that Martin had been found, the captain having requested them not to tell the others. The mate had gone ashore early to inform the consul and the police that no further search need be made.

As the captain still looked sad and anxious, the guilty men believed that Martin had not turned up yet, and as they knew the ship must sail to-morrow, supposed that he would have to be left behind. Now Dan's conscience, which was not altogether deadened, began to trouble him. He thought of Martin's many acts of kindness, how often he had helped him when he was in trouble at Plymouth, how he had said a kind word for him (though against his own wishes) to his father, the captain, by which means he had been allowed to sail in the "Diana"; he remembered how fond his sister was of Martin, how she had enjoined him before they parted to take him as an example, and always to treat him kindly and as his best friend. And, yet, how had he acted? He had joined the worst men on board in mocking at and tormenting Martin during the whole voyage, and finally, prompted by them, in whose

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hands he had been a willing and easy tool, he had shamefully deceived his former friend, led him, notwithstanding his remonstrances, into a den of infamy, and plotted with others to plunder and ruin him. He had never meant to go so far. To humiliate Martin by making him the worse for liquor had certainly been his object. That would be a good joke, and he would always be able to bring it up against him when he wanted to spite him, or make him a laughing-stock. But to leave Martin in the hands of a set of thieves, and perhaps murderers — no! he had never dreamed of such a thing. He was quite drunk himself when they left the tavern on Sunday night, and hardly remembered what had happened. It was Tuesday morning now, and Martin had not turned up. If anything serious had happened to him he would never be able to forgive himself. All hands were busy hauling the cargo on board; some of the men were in the lighters below, others were employed stowing it away in the hold. Among the latter were Dan and Tozer.

"I wish Martin would turn up," said Dan; "what can have become of him?"

"I'm sure I don't," replied Tozer, with an oath; "we're well rid of the young canting vagabond. I didn't think I'd get my revenge so easily. I've to thank you for helping me to that, Dan."

"I'm sorry now I had anything to do with it," said Dan, sulkily. "I never meant to do the fellow any harm, I only wanted to play off a joke upon him. Do you know what's become of him, Tozer?"

"Not I, and I don't care, either; serves him right, whatever has happened to him."

"You haven't got a grain of feeling about you, Tozer; surely you've had enough revenge on the poor fellow; you don't want to have his blood upon your head?" said Dan.

"His blood upon my head, indeed! You're a regular Irishman, Dan, full of feelings and sentiments. How do

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you know he's murdered? and if he is, I know I didn't murder him."

"Yes; but we left him in a nest of thieves, and perhaps of murderers, too," replied Dan.

"You're a softer fellow than I thought you were," laughed Tozer.

Before Dan could reply he was called up from the hold to some other work on deck. His conversation with Tozer had only made him more uneasy in his mind. How would Kate feel if the "Diana" returned to Plymouth without Martin, and what would she say to him when she heard that he was responsible for his absence — aye, perhaps for his death?

All day these thoughts haunted and tormented him. Evening came, and not a word had he heard about Martin. Surely the captain would never sail and leave his son behind. Yet he knew orders were given for weighing anchor at sunrise next morning. He could bear it no longer; he made up his mind before turning in he would speak to the captain, and tell him all he knew about his son. The opportunity soon presented itself. Most of the crew whose work was done had already gone to their bunks in the forecastle. Dan lingered about till the captain, going his rounds, passed close by him. Dan touched his cap and asked if he might speak to him — he had something particular he wanted to say. The captain guessed directly what it was about. He told Dan to follow him and led him to a part of the poop where they were not likely to be overheard by any one.

"What have you got to say to me, Dan M'Carthy?" said the captain, rather sternly.

"Well, sir, it's about Martin I wanted to speak to you. I've been thinking about him all day, and I've not seen him since Sunday night; and as he ain't come aboard I begin to feel so fidgety about the poor fellow. Oh, sir, I hope no harm's come to him" ——

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"You did see him on Sunday night, then," said the captain, severely; "you told me when you came on board that you knew nothing about him."

"Yes, sir, I did; I told a lie, I know, but I was drunk, sir; and now I'll tell you all I know, I will indeed, sir," replied Dan, whose tears now began to flow.

"Well, tell me all about it, then, in as few words as possible," said the captain. "I felt sure all along you'd something to do with the mischief."

Dan related the story of the events of Sunday afternoon and evening plainly enough; he did not conceal his own share in the plot, and of course, when the captain questioned him, he was obliged to name those among the crew who had been ringleaders in the disgraceful affair. As he was all along under the conviction that Martin had not been seen or heard of since Sunday, and was most anxious that he should be discovered, he was far more minute in his description of places, persons, and circumstances than he otherwise would have been. Thus the captain obtained information as to how his son had been led astray, deceived, made drunk, and drugged, before he heard the story from his own lips.

"I'm glad you've made a clean breast of it, Dan, and that you seem ashamed and sorry for your sneaking, cowardly conduct. You very soon forget all the fine promises of steadiness, obedience, and good behavior which you made to me and to Messrs. Willis & Dobbs when we consented that you should sail in the 'Diana,' as well as your gratitude to Martin for speaking to me in your favor."

"Yes, sir, I know I behaved very badly; but you see I'm so easily led by the company I keep," sobbed Dan. "If any misfortune happens to Martin I shall never forgive myself, sir."

"You may make yourself easy on that score, Dan," said the captain; "Martin came back last night, I'm thankful to say, but that doesn't make your conduct the less black.

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I had hoped you were really going to reform at last, but this affair doesn't look like it."

"Martin come back, sir! did you say?" cried Dan. "'Pon my soul, I'm thankful to hear it; it's just as if a burden was taken off my heart. Where is he, sir, that I may ask his pardon at once?"

Dan's despondency had vanished directly he heard that Martin was safe, his face brightened up, and his voice assumed quite a cheerful tone.

"You can't see him now," said the captain, sternly; "go and turn in now, and just consider what a mean, cowardly fellow you are; try and feel ashamed of yourself. I'm glad you've got some conscience, some right feelings, left, or you wouldn't have come and confessed to me as you have done. You were right in that, Dan; I only wish it might be a beginning of better things."

Dan repaired to his bunk in the forecastle; the captain retired to his cabin.

Martin, who had been restless and feverish all day, was rather better in the evening, but was still weak and ailing, for he had not got over the exhaustion caused by want of food and by his long swim the previous night. When the captain came into the cabin, and held the lamp over him, he looked up at him timidly, for his broken promises, his cowardly weakness, the degradation into which he had sunk, as well as the anxiety he had caused his father, lay heavily on his heart. And yet to him he owed his life; had he not plunged into the water and rescued him at the right moment he would now have been a corpse. How could he ever adequately express his sense of gratitude to his father for his love and devotion to him?

"You're better this evening, are you not, Martin?" said the captain, kindly.

"Yes, father," sighed Martin, "but I shall never feel myself again, I'm so ashamed of what I've done; I've been such a disgrace to you."

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"You need not tell me about that now, Martin," said the captain; "besides, I've just heard the whole story from Dan. Not knowing that you'd come back, he got frightened, and came and made a clean breast to me."

"Dan! Oh, father, I wish he'd never sailed with us; he was at the bottom of all the mischief."

"Yes, true enough, Martin, and I'm heartily sorry I ever took him; but that doesn't make any excuse for you yielding, as you must have done, and consenting to join company with him and the worst fellows in the ship. But I know you've been punished enough, and I'm not going to say anything about it now. Another time I'll hear your story, and see how it agrees with Dan's; you'd best keep quiet now. We sail to-morrow morning, and I've got several bills of lading to look through, and other things to do before I turn in, so good-night."

"Good-night, father," said Martin, sadly, "but will you forgive me?"

"Forgive you, my boy? of course I will," said the captain, "but I can't say I shall be able to trust you as I did before," he added, sadly.

"No, father, indeed that you can't! but now you've said you forgive me, I feel much happier. I've asked God, for Christ's sake, to forgive me, too, for I know I have sinned against Him more than against you, and I trust He will. Good-night, father," he said, in a faint but more cheerful voice.

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CHAPTER IX.

HOMEWARD BOUND.

"Has fate o'erwhelmed thee with some sudden blow?
Let thy tears flow;
And know when storms are past, the heavens appear
More pure, more clear;
And hope, when furthest from their shining rays,
For brighter days."

—A. A. PROCTER.

WHEN Martin awoke next morning, the "Diana" was already under weigh, and sailing rapidly down the broad bosom of the Tagus. He felt much better, though still weak and stiff; he sat up in his berth and looked about him; he was alone in the captain's cabin, for his father was busy giving orders on deck. He could scarcely believe his eyes when he perceived at the foot of the berth all his best clothes which he had worn last Sunday, of which he had been stripped in the den of thieves at Lisbon. Even his prayer-book and hymn-book were in his coat pocket. How these clothes had been recovered was a riddle he could not solve.

As soon as the "Diana" sailed, the captain no longer made any secret of Martin's return, but gave out that he was ill, and not able to work yet. In the afternoon he called up Tozer and Smith, and sternly reprimanded them for their disgraceful conduct. They received his words with sullen and contemptuous silence. As the captain did not mention how he had obtained his information, they naturally thought it was through Martin; had they found out that Dan's courage had so far given way as to induce him to tell the captain, he would have had by no means a pleas-

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ant time of it during the rest of the voyage. Dan, the creature of impulse, whose conduct and manners were entirely shaped by the company he kept, of course never let out that he was the informant; now that he knew Martin was safe, his conscience was at ease, he regarded the affair of last Sunday as a good joke, and joined with the others in their sneers and gibes against Martin and his father. That evening, as the men sat smoking in the forecastle, the conversation turned on the subject.

"A precious fool I was to sail in this ship," said Tozer.

"So was I," echoed Smith, "under such a brute of a captain."

"A nice jawing he gave us this afternoon about that ass of a boy of his," continued Tozer. "I only wish the fellow hadn't turned up at all. I can't make out now how he managed to get on board."

"Why, he swam nearly all the way, and when he was getting near the ship got faint and sank, and would have been drowned if the captain hadn't jumped overboard and picked him up," remarked Dan.

"Bad job he wasn't drowned, then!" said Smith.

"Young sneak that he is, too," said Tozer; "he's told his father everything, and made the worst of our spree of last Sunday; a nice spite the surly skipper 'll have against you and I, Smith, all the voyage."

"And against me, too," added Dan.

"I won't stand it," said Tozer, doggedly; "we're treated more like dogs than human beings aboard this 'ere ship."

"That's what I've said all along," replied Smith.

"It doesn't show that either of you have had much experience of ships or captains to talk like that," said an old sailor, who had been sitting quietly by and listening to the conversation. "I've never sailed with a skipper, — and I've been with a good many, — who treated his crew more fairly than Captain Archer; I don't say he isn't stern

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sometimes, but that's very necessary where he has to do with a rough lot, and he's never unjust."

"It's all very well for you to talk, Job, because you're one of his favorites," replied Tozer.

"He hasn't got no favorites," answered the old sailor; "but if men are steady and do their duty on board, the captain never finds fault with them."

"I suppose you mean by that we don't do ours," said Smith.

"If you did, you'd have no reason to find fault with the skipper," replied Job.

"We'll ask your advice when we want it, Job," said Tozer, sullenly. "I expect we know our duty quite as well as you do," and with these words he turned away.

That same evening Martin and his father had a long talk. With many tears and deep penitence Martin related the whole story of the sin and consequent sufferings which his folly and weakness had led him into on Sunday, the greater part of which the captain had previously heard from Dan.

"It'll be a lesson to you, I hope, Martin," said the captain, sadly. "You were too self-confident before; you didn't know how strong the tempter is, or how great is the power of ridicule. He knew where to attack you in a weak point, and you fell far too easily. You didn't pray as you ought for the strength of the Holy Spirit, to be able to resist the devil. I have gone through such trials myself when I was young, and didn't always come out of them blameless. You must take courage, my boy, and don't be too downcast about it; you've sinned deeply, but you've earnestly repented, and your sin has brought with it a severe punishment, one you won't forget in a hurry. In future you're more likely to be on your guard; at least, I hope so. In a day or two you'll be able, I trust, to go about your duties as usual. I shall act towards you just as before. I expect you'll have to put up with plenty of

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taunts and chaff from Tozer and Smith especially, for I spoke as severely as I could to them about their conduct to-day, for which they will owe both of us a grudge. As to Dan, I don't indulge any hopes in his really mending his ways; he'll be ready enough to jeer at you too when he's in bad company."

"I'm quite prepared for all that, father," said Martin, sadly; "moreover, I feel that I richly deserve it. Sha'n't I be able to go to work again to-morrow?"

"No, my boy; you must have another day's rest; but you may leave my cabin and get plenty of fresh air. I don't want you to go back to the forecastle till you're fit for it."

Next morning a fresh northerly breeze was bearing the "Diana" under full sail swiftly along, with the Portuguese coast in view. Martin for the first time appeared on deck; he looked pale and sad. Some of his messmates came up, and greeted him kindly; but he saw Tozer and Smith pointing and sneering at him, while Dan passed him with a significant grin on his face, and a contemptuous nod.

When, however, after a couple of days' rest, Martin was well enough to return to his duties, he was greeted with a volley of chaff and insult from all except the steadier among the crew. Tozer never lost an opportunity of bullying and insulting him, while Dan was among the foremost in raising a laugh at Martin's expense, and in relating, with additions of his own, the story of his having got drunk the previous Sunday. That the captain's son, the model lad, who had been looked upon as the perfection of steadiness, and held up as an example to others for his good conduct, should have fallen so easily and so deeply, was a cause for triumph and exultation to men whose lives were passed in constant vice, and who were sunk in every kind of degradation.

Martin bore it all meekly; he made no reply to their

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jeers and reproaches. He knew beforehand what was in store for him; with God's help, he had made up his mind that these taunts and mockery must be endured patiently, though he found them even more bitter than he had anticipated.

Gibraltar was the next port touched at by the "Diana"; here she remained three days. Neither Martin nor Dan was allowed to go on shore, at which the latter grumbled loudly.

Between Gibraltar and Marseilles the "Diana" experienced calms and contrary winds; her progress was therefore very slow; it was not a pleasant time for either Martin or the captain. Several of the men so distinguished themselves by their insolence and insubordination, in which Tozer was the ringleader, that the master threatened to put the latter in irons if the offence was repeated. Hot words passed between them; Tozer dared him to do it; three men, lazy rascals, evidently espoused his cause. The captain was determined at all risks to maintain discipline on board his ship, and told the men so plainly. Perceiving he was in earnest, they were silent, and determined to abide their time.

When, after remaining five days in the harbor of Marseilles, the skipper gave orders to weigh anchor and sail, it was found that Tozer and Smith were both missing. They had run away, and nothing could be heard of them. Though short of two hands, the master determined to continue his voyage, hoping to supply their places at one or other of the ports of call. He could scarcely regret having got rid of two such scoundrels. The other hands had of course to work all the harder now, at which a few of the crew occasionally grumbled. At Genoa, however, two Italians offered themselves to the captain; he engaged them at once, and they turned out on the whole steady and trustworthy.

It was some time before Martin altogether recovered his

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spirits. A sense of bitter shame, a feeling of deep humiliation, was constantly present to his mind. Through Dan, his story, not a little exaggerated, too, had been repeated to every man on board the ship. Martin felt that he had lost the respect of his shipmates. The father, they might well say, is a stern, strong-willed man whom nothing could ever make flinch for a moment from the path of duty, but the son is a weak, easy-going young fellow, who can be bent like a reed either one way or the other; he'll never be fit to command a ship, for he won't be able to maintain any discipline; he's made of very different stuff from his father. Dan took care that all remarks of this kind should reach Martin's ears; much as they vexed him, they had at the same time the effect of strengthening his determination to do all in his power to retrieve his character. He longed for some opportunity to show his courage and prove to the whole ship's company that he was not afraid of either ridicule or pain, and that no man should henceforth ever make him swerve from the right way.

Meanwhile he was quickly learning his duties as a sailor; he was as nimble and active as any man on board; he was strong, too, beyond his years, and his knowledge of practical seamanship which he had gained by hard study on shore now stood him in good stead, and gave him a decided superiority over all his mates.

His father was gradually beginning to regain the confidence he had lost in Martin through his conduct at Lisbon; nevertheless he never allowed him to go on shore again except in his own company, a circumstance which was not lost on some of the men, who freely made use of it to chaff Martin and revive the story of his Lisbon adventures. Dan, too, was forbidden by the captain to land; as he accused Martin of being the cause, he was always more spiteful and irritating to him when they were in port than at other times.

The "Diana" called at the principal ports of the Medi-

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terranean and Levant to discharge and take in cargo, the voyage lasting about five months. After a stormy voyage home through the Bay of Biscay at the period of equinoctial gales, they arrived in Plymouth Sound early in October.

It was with mingled feelings that Martin gazed once more on the green slopes and red cliffs of his native land. He looked forward with joy indeed to seeing his grandmother and Kate and the good parson again, and to meeting all his other friends in Plymouth, but he felt how grieved some would be when they heard of his weakness and folly, how others would despise and laugh at him for it. He knew well enough that there would be no keeping it secret, for Dan would blaze it abroad as soon as he set his foot on shore. Kate knew all about it already, for he had written her a long letter from Genoa, relating the whole story, though in order not to grieve her more than necessary he had said as little about Dan's share in the business as possible.

"Well, my lad," said the mate to him as they were sailing into the Sound, "here we are at home again, so your first voyage is over! If you always stick as steadily to your duties as you've done in this cruise you'll make a first-rate seaman. I never saw a young fellow fall into his work so quickly and easily as you've done, or understand it so thoroughly, either. Only keep on as you've begun, and you may be a master by the time you're one-and-twenty."

Martin's countenance brightened up at these words.

"Thank you, sir," he said, "for your good opinion. I've tried to do my best, indeed, and I like the sea even better than I expected. I should feel happy enough now if it hadn't been for the scrape I got into at Lisbon."

"Yes, that was a bad affair, indeed," replied the mate; "but it'll be a caution to you; you'll be on your guard another time, as I always tell the captain. I believe you were taken all unawares like, and there was some excuse for you."

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"It's kind of you to say so, sir, but I can't find any excuse for myself," said Martin, sadly.

"Very right, very right, my boy," said the mate, cheerily, "but don't take on too much about it."

It was late at night when the captain and Martin arrived at home. Old Mrs. Archer, who expected them, greeted affectionately her son and grandson. She was greatly pleased by Martin's healthy, manly looks; how he was grown; how bronzed he was by sea and sun! Mr. Newberry, she said, had been to see her a few days ago, and asked when the "Diana" was expected home, and if she had good news of the captain and his son. Kate, too, she mentioned, was in high spirits and eagerly looking forward to Dan's return.

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CHAPTER X.

IN PLYMOUTH AGAIN.

"Wisely my son, while yet the days are long,
And this fair change of seasons passes slow,
Gather and treasure up the good they yield,
All that they teach of virtue, of pure thoughts,
And kind affections, reverence for thy God
And for thy brethren, so when thou shalt come
Into these barren years, thou may'st not bring
A mind unfurnished and a withered heart."

— W. C. BRYANT.

"Did we but see,
When life first opened, how our journey lay
Between its earliest and its closing day;
Or view ourselves as we one time shall be
Who strive for the high prize, such sight would break
The youthful spirit, though bold for Jesus' sake."

— NEWMAN: LYRA APOSTOLICA.

AUNT SARAH, whose temper for the last five months had scarcely been ruffled at all, as neither she nor her niece had had any communications, except in the shop, with the male sex, had latterly been looking forward with no little apprehension to the approaching return of Dan and Martin from their voyage. The long spell of peace she had enjoyed would now come to an end. If Kate mentioned her brother's name, it was a signal at once for an outburst of wrath from her aggrieved aunt. When she received Martin's letter from Genoa, her aunt was highly indignant. What business had she to receive letters, indeed? and from young men in foreign parts, too! She never heard of such a thing, she ought to be ashamed of herself — not content with having a lot of idle young fellows hanging about the shop and hindering her in her business, she must needs

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keep up a correspondence with them, too! She would soon put a stop to that kind of thing. Her ire was increased by Kate's sad and thoughtful looks after receiving this letter, which were really caused by her sorrow at poor Martin's fall, and by the share she could not help guessing that her mischievous brother had in it. But Aunt Sarah imagined that Kate was regretting Martin's prolonged absence, and scolded her well for her weakness and folly, as she called it.

When Dan, late one evening, just as Kate and her aunt were about to go to bed, made his appearance at the door, Kate's joy at seeing her brother again was unbounded. Aunt Sarah looked on grimly; she gave Dan rather a chilling welcome, told Kate she might give him supper, but then was to make haste and go to bed; she wasn't going to have folks in her house sitting up all night making such a noise that she couldn't sleep, as well as bringing disgrace on the neighborhood.

"Aunt Sarah's temper don't seem to be improved, Kate," said Dan as soon as she had turned her back. "I don't think she's best pleased to see me again!"

"You must keep quiet and steady while you're here, and do nothing to vex her," replied his sister.

"We'll see about that," said Dan, doubtfully. "I've such a lot to tell you, Kate."

"That I'm sure you have, Dan, and I'm longing to hear it, but you heard what aunt said — you must be quick with your supper and go to bed, or we shall hear more about it to-morrow. But how's Martin? has he come ashore yet?"

"Oh! Martin's right enough," replied her brother; "he's turned out quite a wild chap since he went to sea, and his father's very strict upon him now, — he never lets him out of his sight."

"I don't believe he's turned out wild, Dan," she answered.

"Whether you do or not, it's true as gospel; the first time he went on shore he got awfully drunk, and on a

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Sunday, too, and stayed out a whole night in Lisbon, and a nice row there was about him."

"He may have got into a scrape once by being too good-natured and over-persuaded by others," Kate interrupted him, "but I'm sure he was sorry for it, and didn't do it again."

"Because he never had the chance, and wasn't let to go on shore by the captain," said Dan, triumphantly.

"And have you been so very steady yourself, Dan, that you can afford to talk in this way about Martin?"

"Well, there's not been much fault to find with me, I think I may say,"——

"Hold your tongues immediately, you two idle gossips," cried Aunt Sarah, as she burst into the room arrayed in her night-cap, in a voice of fury and indignation. "Didn't I tell you to go up to bed at once? I will be obeyed in my own house, or I'll turn you both out of doors. I'll have no nonsense, and I won't stand your loose, bad ways, Master Dan, which you've brought back from your ship, and all the dissolute characters you've been associating with. No, I'm an honest woman, I'm proud to say, and I'm not going to lose my good name because an idle boy and girl sit up till near midnight, making such a rumpus that"——

"Aunt, aunt," said Kate, "we are going up at once,—it's barely a quarter of an hour since you left us: make haste, Dan!" and she took up a candlestick and left the room, speedily followed by her brother, while Aunt Sarah continued to pour forth her wrath in angry and rather incoherent ejaculations.

Kate felt very sad about Martin. She could not believe that such a steady lad as he had always proved himself to be could in so short a time, through evil associations, have so entirely changed in character. Still, from his own letter, she knew he had suffered a grievous fall, the consequences of which he must feel for many a long day, and in various ways.

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Both Martin and Dan had work on board the ship unlading the cargo all the next morning, and it was not till rather late in the afternoon that they were free to go on shore. To Martin's inquiry if he had seen Kate, and how she was, Dan replied that she was all right and longing to see him, but that Aunt Sarah was more of a vixen than ever, and that he'd better beware of falling into her clutches.

As soon as Martin had cleaned himself he started for a stroll down Union Street with the intention of paying Kate a visit if the coast was clear, also going to see Mr. Newberry, who would be expecting him when he knew that the "Diana" had arrived, and as next day was Sunday, he wished to ask if he was to take his place in the choir, as before.

When he reached Stonehouse and turned up the street where Kate and her aunt dwelt, he cautiously approached the shop; his heart beat quickly when, on looking through the window, he saw Kate busily serving out goods to customers, and he was on the point of entering when the gaunt form of Aunt Sarah suddenly appeared in the background. While Kate seemed in his eyes to have grown more amiable and pleasing than ever, though she had rather a sad look on her face, Aunt Sarah, on the contrary, looked sourer and more forbidding than he had ever noticed before. This was owing to the annoyance caused her by Dan's return, as well as by her indignation at Martin's conduct at Lisbon, which, with every possible exaggeration, had a very short time before been related to her by her hopeful nephew, and which she had ever since, when there were no customers in the shop, been throwing into Kate's teeth. The poor girl's expostulations, as well as her excuses for Martin, were utterly in vain; not a word would her aunt hear in his favor: he was a reprobate, a worthless hypocrite, who would come to the gallows at last, — it seemed impossible for her to exhaust the catalogue of his crimes.

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It was well, indeed, for Martin that he thought it more prudent not to venture that afternoon into Aunt Sarah's presence, though he was then ignorant of the cause of her peculiarly wrathful aspect. Before he left the shop-window, however, he was gratified by being recognized by Kate; when the girl saw him the color came into her face and she brightened up at once, but she gave him no encouragement to come in, so he reluctantly turned away and proceeded to Mr. Newberry's parsonage. That gentleman was at home and received Martin in his study; he welcomed him with the greatest kindness, said how pleased he was to see him again safe back from his first voyage; he remarked, too, how he had grown, and how well and strong he looked; then he asked after his father and hoped he should see him to-morrow.

The parson observed all the time that Martin had an anxious look, and was more reserved than usual in his manner: evidently there was something on his mind which very probably he had come to ask advice about; so he questioned him about the voyage, how he had got on with his messmates, how Dan M'Carthy had behaved, and if the crew were on the whole a steady set of men.

Martin, who was only waiting for the opportunity to unburden his conscience, now told the clergyman the whole history of what had occurred at Lisbon, of his shameful fall, and how narrowly he had escaped with his life. As he had to tell the whole truth it was impossible for him to screen Dan, and Mr. Newberry plainly saw the large share he had had in the business. He could not help feeling sad and disappointed that Martin, whom he had given credit for greater strength of character, should have so suddenly fallen, but he perceived how deep and heartfelt his repentance was, he saw how the remembrance of his shame had cast a gloom over the whole of his voyage, how it had saddened and sobered him, and he was particularly pleased with his humility and distrust of self.

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"I'm very sorry for you, Martin," he said, kindly; "and it has been as sad for me to listen to the story as it has been for you to tell it, but take courage and don't be cast down; with God's help it won't happen again. Do you remember how, when we last met, I warned you against self-confidence? You told me you could never be laughed at into doing wrong by your shipmates, and when I counselled you to take care lest Dan should lead you into mischief you replied, 'I hope I'm more likely to keep him out of it.' You see my fears were better founded than your boasts; 'pride cometh before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall.' You trusted entirely to yourself; you did not consider the weakness of your nature, and forgot that the strongest man cannot withstand the temptations of the evil one by his own power, while the very weakest child may do so if he earnestly prays for the help of God's Holy Spirit to uphold and support him. As you have yourself confessed when you were tempted and led astray by those bad men, you trusted entirely to your own strength, so that you were led on from one sin to another, till you were brought to shame and disgrace and narrowly escaped with your life. You've learned a bitter lesson, Martin. When you stray from God you will suffer, and He means you to suffer. You sinned deeply and you've been severely punished for your sin; you'll still suffer for it, I fear, as there are many bad fellows here who will always be glad enough to bring up the story against you, but you mustn't mind that, my lad, but go steadily on doing your duty, and endeavor by your future good conduct to atone for the past."

"You're very kind, sir, in all you say," replied Martin; "I knew you'd be grieved to hear what a disgrace I'd brought on religion by my bad deeds; I'm sure after that I didn't feel as if I could ever trust myself again."

"No, Martin, you cannot trust yourself," said the parson, "but if you pray the Holy Spirit will be given to you to help

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and strengthen you. Pray, then, for an increase of His grace and power, and when the temptation comes you will be able to stand firm. You are not the first who has fallen suddenly before a blast of temptation, and deeply penitent as you are for that fall, you may take comfort from the words of the psalm, 'The Lord ordereth a good man's goings, and maketh his way acceptable to Himself. Though he fall he shall not be cast away, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand.' You must come and see me again some day next week, Martin. I've no more time to speak with you now; you'll take your place in the choir to-morrow as usual?"

"Well, sir, if you wish, but I thought after what happened at Lisbon I should never dare to show my face in the choir again," replied Martin.

"It's your first serious offence, my lad, and I trust, by God's grace, you'll not so far forget yourself again, so I hope to see you regularly in the choir as long as you remain in Plymouth," said the clergyman, kindly. "Now, good-by for the present."

Martin did as the parson wished, and on Sunday morning entered the church in the procession with the other choristers, and joined very heartily in the service. He perceived that Kate was in church, accompanied by Dan; they sat not far off from his father. In the background he observed the gaunt figure of Aunt Sarah. When the service was over a number of young men and boys, as is generally the case, stood near the doors watching the congregation come out, and passing their remarks upon them. None of them were regular attendants at church: some lounged in occasionally because they had nothing better to do, to look about them and listen to the music; others had not been inside the building, but had collected there to meet their friends and to gossip. This group Dan, separating from his sister, joined directly he left the church.

"Hallo, Dan, how are you? Glad to see you!" said one

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of the biggest of the lads, as he clapped him on the shoulder. "Come! that voyage has wonderfully smartened you up! How long are you going to be here? When do you sail again?"

"Oh! I haven't made up my mind about that, Tom, after all the hard work I've had. I want a good rest, I can assure you."

"You look, though, as if the hard work agreed with you, Dan," said another.

"One can't always judge from looks," remarked Dan. "Going to sea's all well enough if you sail with a good captain, but I don't mean to go aboard with Captain Archer again. One has to work like a slave, and is half starved into the bargain."

"Starving don't seemed to have disagreed with you, Dan," remarked one of the lads, laughing, "and your chum, Martin Archer, looks uncommon hearty, too; I saw him in the choir."

"Of course he does; he has always been well looked after by his father, the skipper. He's led an easy enough life of it; but I did open my eyes when I saw him among those choristers again."

"Why, Dan? he's always been the parson's great pet, a quiet, milksop sort of a chap; isn't he the same as he was before?"

"Ha, ha!" laughed Dan, "you little know what sort of a fellow he is, and the parson don't seem to have found him out yet. He's quite different in foreign parts to what he is in Plymouth, — that's to say, if he can get out of his father's sight; he's one face at home, and another abroad, an out-and-out hypocrite, I tell you."

"Come, Dan, that's all very fine," said the first speaker, "but we all know there ain't too much truth in your yarns. I suppose you've had a quarrel, and got a spite against Martin."

"'Pon my honor, Tom, it's all true," replied Dan. "The

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very first Sunday we were ashore he got away from his father, and was rolling drunk about the streets of Lisbon. He never turned up that night on board our ship, and didn't the captain kick up a row about him, and jaw us all, just as if it was the crew's business to look after the precious chap. Next day he went on shore to look for him, but he couldn't find him, because the police had locked him up in the station for making a row in the streets; but he made his appearance somehow or other that night, but was so sick after this spree — so different to what he'd been accustomed to at home — that his father had to keep him in his own cabin, and nurse him like a baby for two or three days!"

This story greatly amused Dan's companions; they burst into shouts of laughter. "He's a sharper chap than I gave him credit for," said the biggest of the group. "What a smooth face he must have put on, to take the parson in so easily! And did he get into any more scrapes afterwards, Dan?"

"No, he never had the chance, for his father never let him out of his sight, again," said Dan.

Aunt Sarah did not often go to church, generally attending a mission chapel near her shop; but to-day she had a particular reason for going to church, viz., that she might keep an eye upon Kate, and hinder her from meeting Martin after the service, as she was certain to do.

Martin's appearance in the choir had filled her with indignation, which she had no little difficulty in repressing even during the service. She fidgeted, she frowned, she shook her head, she muttered to herself, — the words "hypocrite" and "villain" were ever on her lips. Immediately the service was over, she flounced out of church, pushing by and disturbing her neighbors at their devotions, and took up her post at the door, ready to pounce upon and carry off her niece at the moment she emerged from the sacred building. Most people could not fail to remark

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the tall, angry-looking woman, and wondered what could be the matter with her.

As soon as Captain Archer came out of church, he turned round to shake hands with Kate, who was just behind him. She was about to return his friendly greeting, when she was seized by the arm and dragged away by her infuriated aunt, who refused even to speak to the captain, with whom she had previously been on as amiable terms as it was possible for her to maintain with any of the sterner sex.

"Come home with me at once, Kate," she exclaimed. "I see what it is, you are not to be trusted out of my sight. I expect I shall have to forbid your going to church, and insist on your accompanying me to chapel. You ought to be ashamed of yourself, loitering about the doors waiting for young men, and talking in that bold way to Captain Archer. I wonder what we're all coming to in these days; when I was a child of your age, I should never have thought of such a thing. I had more proper feeling and self-respect."

"But, aunt," interposed Kate, with tears in her eyes, "I didn't loiter at all. I was hardly outside the church door when you dragged me off."

"I won't be answered, miss," continued Aunt Sarah. "I know well enough what you were up to. You meant to linger about with the captain, till that drunken young ruffian, Martin" ——

"Aunt, aunt! Martin isn't" —— cried Kate.

"Hold your tongue, you impertinent hussy. I know more about that precious scamp Martin Archer than you do; he never once was let out of his father's sight that he didn't get thoroughly tipsy, — so young, and yet so given to drink, — it's shocking to think of it; and then to think that smooth-faced young villain should go and put on such a pious air, and sit and sing in the choir as if he were an angel — a very fallen one indeed — what horrible

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hypocrisy! And as to your parson, I don't think much of him, for not finding out what sort of characters he has singing in his choir. Well, I shall take care and let him know before next Sunday, and if he don't turn the fellow out at once, it'll be a long time before I darken the doors of his church again, I assure you, and I won't have you go, either."

"You promised my dear mother, aunt, before she died, that I should always go to Mr. Newberry's church," said Kate boldly, while her aunt stopped to take breath, "and I know you're too honest to break your promise."

"I'll not be dictated to, Kate; I shall do what I think best for your good," replied Aunt Sarah, as they entered the house, which they had now reached.

During dinner that day, Captain Archer remarked to his mother, "As I was coming out of church to-day I turned round to speak to Kate M'Carthy, when her aunt pounced down upon her like a cat on a mouse and carried her off; she frowned and tossed her head at me when I was about to greet her civilly; do you know what I've done to offend her, mother?"

"No, Stephen, that I don't, — but Sarah Jennings has a queer temper, and is always taking some strange fancy into her head. With all her roughness I think she's got a good heart."

"Well, it doesn't show itself. I rather pity Kate having to live with her," said the captain.

"I believe she was afraid of Kate speaking to me, father," said Martin sadly; "Aunt Sarah never liked me, and now Dan has probably told her, as he has every one he knows in Plymouth, that I am a drunkard and a thoroughly bad sort of chap. Before, she couldn't find much to say against me, but now she'll make that an excuse for preventing Kate and me seeing anything of each other."

"Dan acts very sneakily and spitefully if he repeats here

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what occurred in Lisbon," said the captain; "I suppose he is silent about his own evil deeds."

"He's so fond of talking, father, he can't keep anything in, and he has a grudge against me now, because I was the cause of his never being let on shore again all the voyage," replied Martin.

"I've made up my mind he doesn't sail with me again," said the captain; "that is, not if I can help it."

"I sha'n't ask you to take him, father," said Martin.

"No, indeed, I should think you'd had quite enough of him," replied the captain.

The idle, rough lot of fellows who were Dan's associates in Plymouth, and who had been informed by him of Martin's evil deeds, were at first under the impression that young Archer had really changed his former steady character, and had become one of themselves; consequently they greeted him warmly next day when, in passing through the street, he fell in with some half-dozen of them, together with Dan.

"You're one of us now, Martin, I'm glad to hear," said their ringleader; "you've given up your dull, quiet ways and mean to enjoy yourself in future; come with us for a spree this evening, won't you?"

"No, thank you," said Martin, decidedly, and was about to walk on.

"Come, Martin," said the other, taking hold of his arm, "don't be a fool; you can't take us in as you did the parson yesterday, and make believe you're the same sober, steady-going fellow you used to be; don't put on your Sunday face, but be as jolly as you were at Lisbon; we know all about it."

"I hope I may never fall into a trap of that kind again," replied Martin. "I know I did make a fool of myself there, and am heartily sorry for it. You won't find me changed at all, Tom, from what I used to be. Good morning!" and he dragged himself away from his would-be companion.

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The whole set burst out into a loud laugh. "Ha, ha!" they cried, "he's a deep 'un; it don't suit his game to show his true colors in Plymouth — he's got his friend the parson to please; it's only when he gets to foreign parts that he dare enjoy himself. Perhaps you'll be glad of our company some day when the parson and all your other strait-laced friends have found you out."

Martin took no notice, and sad at heart pursued his way. How much longer, he thought, and in how many more different ways was he to suffer from the consequences of that one false step which seemed to meet him at every turn?

He determined to resort at once to his kind friend the clergyman. He welcomed him affectionately. "You look sadder, Martin, to-day than you did on Saturday; what has happened now?" he asked.

Martin told him how the story of the scrape he had got into at Lisbon had been repeated by Dan to all his acquaintance in the town, with every possible exaggeration; how it had just been brought up against him by some loose fellows in the street, how he was looked upon as a hypocrite, and how Aunt Sarah would not allow Kate to speak to him.

"I've heard something about this, Martin, already; it reached the ears of some of my Sunday-school teachers, who came to me last night and told me perhaps I was not aware that Martin Archer was not so steady as formerly, but I stopped them at once, and gave them to understand that you had told me all, and that I knew your story was true, because your father had confirmed it to me. I did not deny that you had sinned deeply and grievously, and brought shame on yourself and a scandal on the religion you profess, but I told them plainly that your repentance was real and earnest, and that I felt convinced that God, for Christ's sake, had pardoned your offence, and that by the Holy Spirit's aid you would not again be so easily led astray. For this reason you had, at my own request, taken

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your place in the choir, from which, if you showed the least misconduct, I should at once dismiss you. Then, this morning I had a very strange and indignant letter from one who signs herself 'Sarah Jennings,' and who repeats the same story, and brands you as a hypocrite for deceiving me."

"That is from Kate's aunt, sir," said Martin.

"I shall go and see her," replied Mr. Newberry, "and pacify her if I can; and I must have a talk with Dan, too, if I can get hold of him; I wish I could do him some good."

"I wish it too, sir, but I fear there ain't much chance; nor do I think Kate's Aunt Sarah will listen to anything you may say to excuse me."

"Well, I'll do my best, Martin," said the vicar; "but now I've something else I want to talk to you about. Your father tells me that the 'Diana' won't sail again for nearly six weeks—a longer interval than generally occurs between her voyages—and in about a month's time the bishop is coming here to hold a Confirmation. I hope you will then be confirmed, and meantime devote as much time as you can in preparation for that sacred ordinance. You remember I spoke about it before you sailed, and with the constant and prolonged absence at sea which your profession entails there may not be another opportunity for some time. You lament your weakness to withstand temptation, you grieve because you yielded before the mockery and ridicule of others; here then your heavenly Father offers you a means by which you can obtain greater strength to resist falling into sin. He calls upon you now boldly and publicly to confess before men that you are in truth Christ's faithful soldier and servant, and that you mean to serve Him as such till your life's end. Are you ready to do this?"

"Yes, sir," said Martin decidedly, "but what I fear is lest after being confirmed I should fall as grievously as I did before, and then my sin would be all the greater."

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"If you seek for the Spirit's help and mistrust yourself you certainly will not be so sadly led astray again, and the fact that you have taken the vows of the Lord upon you will make you more watchful and more dependent on the grace which will enable you to resist the attacks of the great enemy of souls, and he will flee from you."

"That's true enough, sir," said Martin, "and I'll do my best to prepare for the Confirmation; it'll draw down upon me plenty of chaff from the lads about here, and it's hard being called a hypocrite, sir, because I feel, however bad I may have been, I ain't that."

"You must expect that kind of thing, Martin," said the parson; "they that will live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. The lives of good men are an offence to the wicked, because they are a standing rebuke to their own. You must not expect that the voyage to heaven is smooth sailing the whole way; there are as many as sudden and as severe storms in it as there are in voyages on the seas and oceans of this world; but you are sailing under a Captain who never will suffer you to perish in the wildest tempest which may rage around your soul; you have only to call upon Him in the day of trouble, and He will deliver you, and you will glorify Him. You may have a long life and a hard life before you, or God may see fit to take you to Himself in your youth, — whichever it may be, remember that if you keep strictly to the path of duty all will be well. Duty is work for God. Stick to it fearlessly through good report and evil report, even to the very death, if it be needful. Of this you have plenty of examples in the heroes of your native land and native town. In the words of our immortal poet,—

> "Be just, and fear not;
> Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,
> Thy God's, and truth's."

Your highest ambition, I know, my lad, is to rise in your profession; you hope some day to be a captain yourself, an

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honor to us in Plymouth, to your country, and to the merchant service. You can have but one nobler aim, and that I now urge upon you — to prove yourself the true, faithful, devoted servant of that Divine Master who died for you on the cross, to show plainly that you are not ashamed of Him, and to fight manfully under His banner to your life's end."

The tears started to Martin's eyes; the parson's words had sunk deeply into his heart and fired him with enthusiasm in the sacred cause. He replied, humbly, "God helping me, sir, I will do my best to walk in the right way. I know it'll be hard enough sometimes, but I mustn't mind that. And what am I to do, sir, when Dan and the other fellows jeer at me, as they did just now, and call me a hypocrite?"

"Take no notice of them, Martin. When they see that their taunts and chaff have no more effect on you than water on a duck's back they will get tired of it, and leave off. But be as civil and cheerful with them as possible. When you have to refuse to join them, do so decidedly, but without putting on a long face or an air of superiority, which never does any good to characters of that sort, and only incites them to further mockery. But you can avoid their company as much as possible. Now, good-by, my boy, and may God bless you."

They parted now, and, full of the thoughts which this conversation had called forth, Martin returned home.

Mr. Newberry was determined that Martin should not suffer more than he could help from the exaggerated stories of his bad conduct which Dan had set afloat; so that afternoon he proceeded to the shop of Sarah Jennings, in Stonehouse. There were no customers present; Kate was behind the counter, busy as usual. When she saw Mr. Newberry she started and colored, for a visit from the clergyman was an unheard-of event; what could be the meaning of it? but she looked pleased, nevertheless, when

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he greeted her kindly, and said, "Kate, I want to speak a word with your aunt; is she at home now?"

"Yes, sir; she's in the parlor; shall I call her?"

"Ask her if I can go in and speak to her there." Kate vanished at once, but reappeared almost immediately, followed by the tall figure of Aunt Sarah, who looked very severely over her spectacles at this most unexpected visitor.

"I hope I am not disturbing you, Miss Jennings," said the clergyman, very politely; "I should be very glad to speak with you for a moment."

"I am at your service, sir," replied Aunt Sarah, abruptly, and in a manner which implied that if any attack was projected she felt herself quite a match for her opponent.

Mr. Newberry followed her into the small parlor behind the shop; she offered him a chair, took one herself, and waited to hear what he had to say.

"You were the writer of this letter, I believe, Miss Jennings," he began, as he took from his pocket the letter he had received that morning.

"Yes; I thought it right you should know how you were being deceived by that young hypocrite, Martin Archer. I could scarcely believe my eyes when I saw him in the choir yesterday morning in church."

"There was no deception whatever about the matter," replied the clergyman quietly. "You have heard, I believe, some exaggerated stories about Martin's bad conduct — that he did fall into grievous sin I am well aware; he took the earliest opportunity of coming to tell me about it himself, and I know from others also the whole facts of the case. Martin is deeply penitent for his fault, he was led into sin by others, and especially by your nephew Dan — not that that is any excuse for him. He has suffered very severely in consequence, and I am confident that he will not be led astray again. It was at my wish that he

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took his place in the choir yesterday, and the boy is certainly quite the reverse of a hypocrite."

"Well, sir, you're welcome to your opinion, and I am to mine. He's a thorough, sly young scamp; I've always thought so. As to Dan, every one knows what a vagabond he is; but he doesn't set himself up for a saint, as that there Martin does. I'm not going to allow my niece to keep company with him, I can assure you. I can't stand hypocrisy — not I."

"With regard to the company kept by your niece, Miss Jennings, you must act as you think best. From their infancy, Kate and Martin have been accustomed constantly to associate, and it seems hard on both of them that for one fault on Martin's part — for which he has been severely punished, and of which he heartily repents — they should be separated. My visit to you was with the hope that I should be able to remove from your mind those false impressions you have received with regard to the character of a lad in whom I have always taken an affectionate interest, whom I believe to be really steady and well-disposed, and who, I hope, will turn out to be a credit to himself and his country."

"Excuse me, Mr. Newberry, but I can't agree with you; you men are easily taken in; we women see much deeper into character than you do. He's an artful one, that Martin," said Aunt Sarah, shaking her head ominously.

"Well, I'm sorry I can't convince you, Miss Jennings," said the vicar rising, "but time will prove which of us is right. I know you are an honest, straightforward woman, and would not willingly be unjust to any one. You must remember we're not all perfect; the best of us daily fall into some kind of sin, for which we have to entreat the forgiveness of a holy and righteous God. Those who are called out into the world, and when young and experienced are suddenly and unexpectedly exposed to the violence of temptation, cunningly planned, perhaps, by evil compan-

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ions, are likely enough to fall. But when they humble themselves in deep penitence before God, and implore Him for Christ's sake to pardon them, He hears their prayers and restores them to His favor. The Bible tells us this over and over again. And if a holy God forgives sinners, surely their fellow sinners ought to do so too, and give those who fall another chance to amend and do better."

Aunt Sarah looked very stern, but could not find any answer to the clergyman's words. He was about to take his leave when he remembered that Kate, who had for some time been attending his classes with a view to the approaching Confirmation, had asked him to say something to her aunt about it, as she had lately shown some opposition and raised objections to Kate's taking such a step.

He had touched on a point which was not likely to smooth the already ruffled feathers of the irate aunt.

"Kate knows my opinion about that. I never thought much of it. She persists she must go. On religious points her mother and I differed, and, out of respect to her memory, I allow Kate to follow her inclination on those points, as long as she does nothing extravagant; but I shall be heartily glad when all this going out to services is over."

Mr. Newberry, not wishing to raise another storm, wished her good-morning, and left the shop. He hoped that on reflection she might perceive the reasonableness of his remarks, and relent in her conduct towards poor Martin.

After the vicar had left she muttered a great deal to herself about parsons having their pets and favorites, how easily they were taken in by deep, designing people, and how little they knew of the ways of the world.

Next morning, while Mr. Newberry was visiting in his parish, he met Dan, who was lounging idly through the streets. With the recollection of how ungratefully and

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ill-naturedly he had behaved to Martin, he had some difficulty in accosting him in a friendly manner, which he felt was necessary in order to arrest his attention.

Dan looked sheepish when he was spoken to by the parson. He had a guilty conscience, and thought he was in for a scolding. He would have run away, if possible, but he saw no way of escape; he must, therefore, make the best of it.

"Well, Dan M'Carthy," said Mr. Newberry, "so you're back in Plymouth again. You've been to sea, I hear."

"Yes, sir," replied Dan, taking courage, "and I suppose before long I'll be sailing again."

"You mean to stick to the sea then, I suppose, Dan."

"Well, I think so, sir, though it does not suit me in everything."

"We can't have everything just as we wish it in this world, you know, Dan. Those who are not fond of hard work, and yet, unless they mean to be beggars and vagabonds, must work for their bread, will find something they don't like in every calling. What do you object to in the sea?"

"It isn't so much the sea, sir," replied Dan, "as the ship I last sailed in. I mean that the captain is just awful strict, and blows one up like blazes for the least fault."

"You mean Captain Archer, I suppose, Dan," said Mr. Newberry; "though he may be severe on board his ship, he's a just man, I know, and kind-hearted, too; it's quite right that strict discipline should be maintained on shipboard; crews are often composed of rough, lazy fellows who require to be kept in order — otherwise both ship and captain might come to grief. Your old friend, Martin, being your shipmate on board the 'Diana,' I should have thought would have made it pleasant to you."

Dan wondered whether the parson knew about what had occurred at Lisbon, and his share in it; he merely replied,

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"Yes, Martin and I are old friends, certainly, but we didn't see much of each other on board ship, sir."

"Because, I suppose, you took up with companions who were not quite so steady as Martin, and so avoided him. Wasn't that the case, Dan?"

"You wouldn't call Martin steady, sir, if you knew how he went on; the first day we went ashore he got roaring drunk and never turned up for a day and a night."

"You've very little shame about you, Dan, to talk about that affair to me; you know very well that you were at the bottom of all the mischief, and the main agent in the plot for ruining poor Martin. I know the whole story, so you can't deceive me. Your conscience didn't allow you to rest that night when you thought that, perhaps through your fault, Martin might perish, and you then told the captain faithfully enough about your share in the disgraceful business; but you seem very soon to have forgotten the remorse you then felt. Have you not during the few days you've been back here done all in your power to blacken Martin's character by telling his story, with additions of your own, not only to your idle and vicious companions, that they might ridicule and annoy Martin, but to your aunt and sister, too, in order to poison their minds against him? Now, what has he done to deserve this treatment from you? Has he shown you any unkindness or done you an ill turn?"

"No, sir, but when folks give themselves great airs and sets up to be better than others, it's as well the truth should be told," replied Dan.

"Surely, Dan, you're not the one to talk about other people's failings. Think of your own. Reflect on your ungrateful conduct towards Martin. Had it not been for him you wouldn't have got a berth on board the 'Diana' at all; he begged his father to take you. And this is how you return his kindness. Had you a grain of generosity about you, instead of publishing abroad the scrape Martin

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fell into, you would do all in your power to amend it. You're a shabby fellow, Dan; I wish I could make you feel ashamed of yourself, and then perhaps I might have some little hope in your future."

Dan hung his head and said nothing; the parson continued: "The least you can do, Dan, is to try and make amends to Martin for the mischief you have done him by your idle gossip and slander. Let your aunt hear from your own lips about your part in the affair at Lisbon, of which you have made so much; tell your lazy companions the truth, too, and hinder them as far as you can from making Martin a butt and a laughing-stock. He fell once, and no one regrets it more than I do; but compare his whole life and general conduct with your own, Dan, and I don't think you'll have any cause to boast. I wish I could see you try to mend your ways, and lead a steady life. Why are you so easily swayed and influenced by those you're with? Have you no firmness of character, no wish to do what's right, no desire to be trusted and respected?"

"Yes, I have, sir, and I assure you I mean to do better next voyage. I'll make it up with Martin, — I wish I'd said nothing about his getting drunk. I'm sorry I told Aunt Sarah about it."

"How often before you've promised to turn over a new leaf, Dan, and nothing has come of it. It seems as if you could not persevere in doing right," said Mr. Newberry.

"That's true, I know, sir, but I keep straight enough so long as I'm with steady fellows. I ain't altogether so bad as you take me for."

"You're too fond of pleasure, my lad, and not fond enough of work, — that's at the bottom of it. Now take my advice, — get some work to do that'll keep you out of mischief while you're ashore, and don't forget your promise to me to make amends to Martin as far as you can for the injury you've done him."

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"Yes, sir, I promise you that," replied Dan, as he touched his cap and took leave of the parson.

"An unstable, unsatisfactory fellow," thought Mr. Newberry on his way home; "his faults mostly attributable to his Irish blood and to the bad example of his father before him; still there are some good points in him, which might perhaps be so worked upon as to effect a permanent and favorable change in the lad's character."

When Dan went home that evening, rather earlier than usual, it so happened that Aunt Sarah was not at home. Brother and sister were therefore left alone together. Kate seized the opportunity to speak very seriously to her brother, especially with regard to his conduct towards Martin.

"If you love me as you say you do, Dan, why do you vex and grieve me by setting aunt against Martin, so that she won't allow me even to speak to him? it's unkind to me as well as to him. I'm sure he doesn't deserve it from you. He's always been your friend; he got you the berth on board the 'Diana,' though he was afraid at the time you'd be a bother to him somehow or other on board. I knew all about the scrape he got into at Lisbon long before he came back, for he wrote me a long letter about it from Genoa, and not a word did he say about your share in it. That proves how generous he is, — how different from you, Dan."

"Yes, Kate, I've acted wrongly towards Martin, I confess. I'm very sorry, and I'll do all I can to make up for it to him. I'd speak to Aunt Sarah about it, if she'd only listen to me."

"Well, if you're sorry, and 'll do all you can to set the matter right, I'll say no more about it, Dan; but I wish you weren't so changeable," said his sister, with a sigh.

"It's my nature, Kate, — I can't help it," replied her brother.

"You can if you choose, Dan. If you go on like that

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you'll never be fit for anything, and be despised by everybody. You're one thing to-day and another to-morrow; there's no dependence on you at all."

"There's one thing I'm steady enough in, Kate, and that's in my love to you. I do everything to please you, don't I now?" said Dan, kissing his sister.

"Well, yes; I can't contradict you in that," replied Kate.

Dan kept his promise, by speaking to Aunt Sarah in Martin's favor. She told him he was a lazy vagabond and a story-teller. How could she know when he was speaking the truth, as he said one thing one day and another the next? Her previous interview with Mr. Newberry had, however, somewhat appeased her wrath towards Martin, and she was willing to treat him as before; that is to say, she barely tolerated him. Kate and he were allowed to meet next Sunday coming out of church, and they managed now and then to snatch a hasty interview during the week.

Both Martin and Dan had work at the docks in connection with the ship for a full fortnight after the "Diana" arrived in Plymouth. This helped to keep the latter steady.

It was natural enough that neither the captain nor his son should wish to have Dan with them on their next voyage; they both hoped, in fact, that he would not offer himself again. In this, however, they were wrong. A fortnight before the day fixed for sailing, Dan appeared at Willis & Dobbs' office, requesting to form one of the crew. He was told to come again, and an answer should be given him. Meanwhile the ship-owners sent for Captain Archer, and inquired of him how Dan had conducted himself during the last voyage. As the captain was an honest and truthful man, he could only say that he had been a little lazy and wild now and then. The head of the firm perceived from the captain's manner that he had some objection to taking the lad again, and remarked: "I perceive, Captain Archer, from your manner, that you don't want

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Dan M'Carthy; still, you haven't found any great fault with him. Plainly enough he is already the better for your discipline, and after another voyage perhaps he'll turn out quite steady. Give him another chance, then, I beg you."

The captain consented, reluctantly.

It was owing to his sister's persuasion that Dan had again offered to sail in the "Diana." When Martin next saw Kate after hearing these unwelcome tidings he said to her, reproachfully,—

"You may have done your brother a kind turn, Kate, by persuading him to sail in father's ship again, but you've done me an unkind one; why do you persist in trying to bring us together? You have seen by this time that I can't do Dan any good, and that he has done me harm."

"I am sure, Martin, Dan's much better than he used to be; that last voyage steadied him, and he hasn't been so lazy since he's been ashore. You have a good influence on him, I know; and now you are on your guard, he won't get you into any more scrapes, but you'll keep him out of them. I'm sure I didn't mean to do you an unkind turn, Martin."

"Perhaps you didn't, Kate, but I'm bitterly disappointed. I hoped this voyage to have been rid of Dan, and to have had some peace and quiet; he stirs up all my shipmates against me."

"I'll give him a good talking to about that before you sail, Martin," replied Kate.

"He'll soon forget his promises, Kate, after he's out of your sight," said Martin, bitterly.

It was only a few days before the date fixed for the sailing of the "Diana" that the Confirmation took place at St. Michael's Church.

In the morning, Martin spent an hour alone with Mr. Newberry, who spoke very seriously to him about his future career, urging on him the importance of seeking, where alone they can be found, strength of will and steadfast

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resolution to withstand those fierce temptations to which his calling as a sailor peculiarly exposed him.

"Remember, Martin," he said, "Whose child you are; that your heavenly Father is never absent from you, but ever by your side; that if you hold fast to Him, call upon Him in every trouble, temptation, and danger, He will succor and deliver you: therefore, 'Faint not to be strong in the Lord,' that He may confirm you; cleave unto Him: for the Lord Almighty is God alone, and beside Him there is no other Saviour."

After praying earnestly with him, the good man gave him his blessing; then, full of solemn thoughts, Martin went quietly home till the hour fixed for the service.

Reverently and humbly Martin a few hours after knelt before the altar, and with a few others pledged himself to be a faithful follower of Jesus Christ. When the lads had been confirmed the girls followed; among them was Kate; she prayed not for herself only, but for her brother and Martin, too, imploring that the former's heart might be changed, and that Martin might be strengthened in the right way, protected among all the perils of the sea to which he would be exposed, and also be the means of helping Dan to lead a better life, so that he too might turn out an honest and steady man.

The ceremony over, both listened with rapt attention to the bishop's fatherly counsel and earnest exhortation. Quietly and silently they returned to their homes, and fervently did both pray that night that God would defend them with His heavenly grace, that they might continue His forever, and daily increase in His holy Spirit more and more until they came unto His everlasting kingdom.

At the celebration of the Lord's Supper, on the following Sunday at St. Michael's Church, Martin and Kate knelt side by side before the altar, and received their first communion from Mr. Newberry's hands. Both felt it to be one of the most solemn and important moments in their lives.

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Captain Archer knelt there, too; he devoutly prayed that his son might continue to walk in the path of duty and in the fear of the Lord, and be enabled by the Spirit's help to resist those temptations to sin to which he might be exposed.

The week which followed was taken up by preparations for the "Diana's" voyage, as the next Monday was fixed for sailing. At the wish of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, but to his own regret, the captain had consented to allow Dan to be among the crew.

He was as full of professions of reform, and promises of good behavior, as he had been on the previous occasion, but neither the captain nor Martin placed any confidence in them now.

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CHAPTER XI.

PROMOTION.

"In the lexicon of youth which fate reserves
For a bright manhood, there is no such word
As fail."

—LORD LYTTON: RICHELIEU.

THIS time the captain had a steady crew. Dan was consequently kept in good order; having no wild companions to associate with, or to lead him into mischief, he had to submit to the inevitable, and though he was now and then found fault with for laziness and neglect of duty, he did not give the captain or mate such trouble as on the former voyage. With Martin he was generally civil and friendly, especially when he wanted to get help from him in his work; his Irish fun and wit made him rather a favorite with the men, though they constantly chaffed him for his indolence, and for the ingenuity by which he endeavored to shirk his duties.

It was a long cruise which the "Diana" made this year; she had a heavy cargo both on her outward and homeward voyage. At all the ports of the Levant she anchored to discharge or take on board goods and produce. On these occasions there was plenty of hard work for the crew. Martin distinguished himself by his diligence and steadiness. He had thoroughly taken to a sailor's life, he made rapid progress in practical seamanship; next voyage he would no longer be ranked as a boy, but as an able seaman, for, young as he was, he was much more capable and trustworthy than many older men.

"An uncommon smart chap is that lad of yours, captain,"

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said the mate one day to Captain Archer, as they stood together looking over the bulwarks, and watching the men who were heaving the cargo on board from the lighters at the ship's side in the beautiful bay of Smyrna; "he does as much work as two ordinary men; what a contrast he is to that idle fellow Dan. I've been watching them both this last half hour."

"Yes, Hamilton, Martin takes well to his work, I'm pleased to see; if he goes on as steadily he'll soon rise in our profession, in which trustworthy men are much wanted now-a-days. But as to Dan, he's been better this voyage; I hope he'll do something for himself after all. I've not had any great fault to find with him."

"No, sir; because we've got a rare quiet crew this time. I wish we always had such a steady lot; why half of 'em's teetotallers, and I don't believe the rest was ever the worse for liquor in their lives. With a rough, gay set of men, Dan M'Carthy would give us a lot of trouble, I warrant."

"Well, we'll give him credit for fairly good conduct so far, Hamilton," said the captain; "but that he's naturally lazy, like most of his fellow-countrymen, I can't deny."

All the winter months were passed cruising between the Levant and Mediterranean ports. It was not till late in the spring that the "Diana" ended her long voyage, which had been singularly prosperous and free from adventures of every kind, and once more anchored in Plymouth Sound.

They found all well at home. Old Mrs. Archer had not, as her son feared, suffered from the cold winter. Aunt Sarah, who had been somewhat troubled with neuralgia, did not give her nephew a very hearty welcome, but she was extremely irritated on the morning after the "Diana's" arrival by the appearance of Martin in her shop, and by the very warm greeting which he and Kate, notwithstanding

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her formidable presence, gave each other. During his six months' absence Martin had grown very much and considerably developed; though only just seventeen, he might have been taken for twenty, and was a manly and decidedly good-looking young fellow.

Though he addressed Aunt Sarah with the greatest respect, inquiring politely after her health, she scarcely returned his salutation; she looked daggers both at him and Kate, and sharply ordered the latter to attend to her business, and not stand gossiping there. Martin took the hint and at once left the shop.

It was plain enough to Aunt Sarah that unless she took very decided measures the intimacy between Martin and Kate, which had existed from childhood, would soon ripen now into a warmer attachment. Though she had really no fault to find with Martin, as he bore an excellent character, which even Dan could not gainsay, yet she disliked him all the more on account of his attachment to Kate, and its probable results. Abhorring men and matrimony as she did, any one who dared to pay his addresses to her niece must be particularly obnoxious to her.

Poor Kate, therefore, had a hard time of it. That evening her aunt rated her well for her boldness and want of modesty in encouraging young men to come into the shop to gossip. All her niece's protestations and excuses that Martin was an old friend, and that after being absent so long it was but natural he should come to see her when he came on shore, were utterly vain to soothe the irritated feelings of her relative. "*She* had always borne a respectable character, and her shop, too; and she wasn't going to have it turned into a lounge for idle youths and dissolute sailors coming and lolling over the counter, and courting her niece when she ought to be attending to other customers, who were all kept waiting, while they were going on with all that silly nonsense. She wasn't going to have Kate live with her unless she could behave

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herself like a quiet, well-conducted young woman." She forbade her to speak or to have any further communication with Martin.

Kate, generally submissive to her aunt's iron will, could not stand this. She replied she could not promise never to speak to Martin; he was her oldest friend, and no one had a word to say against his character; it was very hard, then, that they should not be allowed to meet occasionally and talk to each other.

A storm of angry words from Aunt Sarah followed; for the next few days she would hardly speak to Kate, and kept a very sharp look-out lest Martin should come into the shop, or be lurking about outside. However, when Sunday came, Martin and Kate met coming out of church, and as the service happened to be over early, they took a short stroll together. Martin was in very good spirits; he told Kate about his successful voyage, how bright his prospects were now: he might, he said, be a mate by the time he was twenty, if he kept up his good character. She would be pleased to hear, too, that Dan had conducted himself much better this cruise, and had not got into any scrapes.

"That's good news, indeed," said Kate; "but I can't say much for his conduct since he's been back; he's been out very late at night once or twice, and the last time I'm sure he'd had too much. My aunt says if he does so again she'll turn him out of doors, and I believe she'll be as good as her word."

"I was afraid, when he got away from the discipline of the ship, he'd break loose and be rather wild," said Martin. "You must do all you can to keep him steady, Kate. But how cross your aunt looked at me when I came to see you the other day. Have I done anything fresh to offend her?"

"No, nothing fresh, Martin; but she can't bear you—she never did; if you had the character of an angel it

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would be all the same. You know she never could endure men or boys, and she seems to dislike you more than all of them put together. She forbade me to speak to you the evening after you came, but I said I couldn't promise that, and then she flew into an awful passion."

"Poor Kate, you must have a hard life of it with her. I can't think why she hates me so," replied Martin.

Kate did not confess that she knew the reason well enough; she only answered, "She's always been strong in her likes and dislikes, and without reason, as far as any one else can see. She's got a kind heart, I believe, at the bottom of it all."

"She don't show it much, Kate," said Martin.

"Not to you, certainly," she replied, smiling. "But I must hurry home; if she hears we have been walking together I shall pay for it. So, good-by, Martin."

Messrs. Willis & Dobbs were so thoroughly satisfied with Captain Archer, feeling more confidence in him than in any of the other skippers in their employ, that they sent for him about a fortnight after his return, and offered him the command of their largest ship, which was to sail ere long for the West Indies and the ports of South America. In proportion to the responsibility his salary was naturally to be increased; the voyage would be a long one, as many places were to be touched at, and much cargo discharged and taken in. The master who had formerly commanded the "Star of Devon" had signified his wish to retire, and the owners were therefore free to offer the command to Captain Archer. Many of the crew of the "Diana" would, they felt sure, be glad to sail under their former captain, though in a different ship, and his son Martin among the number, no longer classed as a boy, but as an able seaman.

Captain Archer was as surprised as he was gratified by the offer. He had neither sought nor anticipated this promotion. He thanked the owners for this proof of their

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confidence, while he gladly accepted the new and important post they destined for him.

"I have a piece of news for you to-day, Martin," he said to his son when he came home to dinner; "something you'll be glad to hear."

"What is it, father?" asked Martin, eagerly. "Am I to be promoted next voyage to able seaman?"

"Yes, my lad, and your father's to be promoted, too."

"Why, father, how can you be? You're master already. But this is good news indeed for me!"

"I can be promoted to a larger ship, Martin, you know, and that is the case. Willis & Dobbs have offered me the command of the 'Star of Devon,' and I have accepted it, and you are to sail with me as an able seaman."

"Hurrah!" cried Martin, clapping his hands for joy. "Why, she's the finest ship they've got — nearly a thousand tons; and you get better pay, of course, father, and so shall I."

"Yes, Martin; but you'll have more work, and I greater anxiety and responsibility. We must both of us take that into consideration."

"Of course, father; but it's a great honor to you, for Willis & Dobbs wouldn't give you their largest ship to command if they didn't think that you were their best skipper."

"Well, well, Martin; I'm very grateful to them, and I hope they won't find their confidence misplaced."

"No fear of that," replied Martin. "I hope I shall get a chance of telling the good news to Kate; but Aunt Sarah keeps such a sharp look-out it's not often I can get a word with her."

"I suppose we shall have to take Dan with us, Martin; and as you've been promoted, he'll expect to be promoted, too."

"He's sure to ask to sail with you, father; and as he

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was steadier last voyage, you can't say much against it; but he broke out again as soon as he got on shore. He has never been so wild as he has been the last few days; he's taken sadly to drink, and has given his poor sister trouble enough. His aunt has threatened to turn him out of doors, and I expect she'll do it."

"I'm sorry to hear that; if it gets to the ears of Willis & Dobbs he won't be promoted," said the captain.

That afternoon Martin went to stroll on the Hoe; he was in the best of spirits, full of happy anticipations for the future. Here, lying idly in the sun, he perceived Dan, who greeted him with a somewhat contemptuous nod. His clothes were dirty and ragged; his red eyes and haggard looks gave him a very dissipated look, and showed only too plainly the bad habits and evil company he had latterly taken to. Martin went up to him at once.

"I've got some news to tell you, Dan," he said.

"Have you, Martin? I don't suppose it's anything I care for," he replied, lazily.

"Perhaps not, for it concerns me more than you. Father's made captain of the 'Star of Devon,' and I'm to sail in her; I am promoted to able seaman."

"Indeed! What grand folks we are become all of a sudden! Then Dan M'Carthy 'll be an able seaman, too, and sail in the 'Star of Devon.'"

"Perhaps he may, but you'd better not make too sure of it, Dan."

"If you're promoted, Martin, I shall be, too; I'm as old as you, and went to sea when you were a little boy at school," said Dan, with a grin.

"Of course, Dan, you'd be equal to me in age, but take my advice and be steadier for the few weeks you are on shore; if Willis & Dobbs hear how you've been going on lately they won't promote you, I know."

"And who's to tell them, I should like to know, except you or your strait-laced father? If you or your father play

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me any ill turns of that kind, Martin, you shall pay for it," he said, surlily.

"I should have thought you'd known me long enough, Dan, to feel that I'm the last one to play you an ill turn; have I ever done so, or my father, either? Hasn't it been owing to us that you've been both voyages in the 'Diana'?" replied Martin, seriously.

Dan made no reply. He knew that Martin spoke the truth. He continued:

"Do me a good turn, Dan, for once, and tell Kate this piece of news about our being promoted and sailing in the 'Star of Devon'; you know it's rarely enough I can get a glimpse of her now, for your aunt hates me more than ever."

Dan, who suddenly saw an opportunity for making mischief, in which he so greatly delighted, and an occasion for teasing his sister, and exasperating his aunt more than ever against Martin, replied, —

"Of course, Martin, I'll be glad enough to carry to her any messages you like; it's very hard you should not be allowed to see each other. I don't object to your having Kate for a sweetheart, indeed I'll be proud to call you my brother-in-law, Martin, though we're different enough in our tastes" ——

"Dan! Dan!" said Martin, coloring, "I never spoke of Kate as a sweetheart; we've grown up together from children, and always been sworn friends; we're both too young to think" ——

"Ah! ah!" laughed Dan; "don't deceive me, Martin; your face betrays you now. I always knew that Kate and you meant to make a match of it; she's over head and ears in love with you; as to being too young, why you look three years older than you are. No, no, I have been up to your game a long time, my boy."

Certainly Dan was the last person Martin would have chosen for a confidant, but he could not deny he had

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guessed the truth; he was, too, rather flattered by Dan's assertion that Kate was in love with him.

"Come, Dan," he said, good-naturedly, "you're a sharp fellow, and if I said that I didn't look forward to the day when Kate would be my sweetheart I should be telling an untruth, but don't go and say anything about it to her or to Aunt Sarah, for goodness' sake."

"How easily I've got your secret out of you, Martin!" replied Dan; "but you may trust me. I can assure you I'll keep it locked up in the depth of my heart," and he put his hand to his heart as a proof of his sincerity.

"I hope you will, Dan, or you may get me into a nice scrape," said Martin, imploringly, as he turned away.

That evening Dan came in to supper in very good time; he assumed his demurest face. Aunt Sarah had had more customers than usual, and was in very good humor for her. Kate was tired and rather silent. After they had been sitting at table about five minutes, Dan remarked, "I have got some news to tell you, Kate, which I heard this afternoon."

"What is it, Dan?" inquired his sister.

"That Captain Archer has been promoted by Willis & Dobbs to command the 'Star of Devon,' the biggest ship they have, and that Martin is made an able seaman."

Kate's eyes sparkled with pleasure, which both her aunt and brother observed. "And you, Dan," she asked, "are you promoted, too, and will you sail under Captain Archer in his new ship?"

"That I don't know yet, but very likely I shall — not that I care, for I shouldn't be sorry for a change of captains."

"I hope you will still sail under Captain Archer, Dan; I'm sure he's been very kind to you, and you couldn't be with a better," said Kate.

"He's too strict for me, to tell you the truth, Kate; I want more liberty than he gives his chaps — but I mustn't for-

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get the messages Martin sent you by me this afternoon, Kate. It was he who told me this piece of news — he seemed half mad with joy — he charged me to come and tell you at once. He sent his love to you and his duty to Aunt Sarah; I was to tell you that he was now on the high road to promotion, that he had all his life looked upon you as his sweetheart, and that in a few years' time he hoped to be able to call you his wife."

These words were spoken by Dan slowly and emphatically, while with a mischievous gleam in his eyes he gazed first at his sister, then at his aunt, to observe the effect which they produced. Poor Kate turned crimson and hung down her head. Aunt Sarah, dropping her knife and fork upon the table, became livid with rage. She glanced angrily at Dan, but looked as if she would annihilate Kate; her clinched fists came down with a loud thump upon the table, and she shrieked out:

"Hold your tongue, Dan! how dare you be the bearer of the impertinent messages of that dissolute young scoundrel, who is the plague of my life when he isn't at sea? The impudent vagabond! And you, you forward, ill-conducted hussy, at your age — only just out of leading-strings — encouraging a fellow like that to pay you his addresses and talk such stuff and nonsense! Nice days we live in, indeed! But I always knew that fellow Martin would come to no good; I felt sure he was always lurking about here with some bad or dishonest motive in view. Well! I'll soon put a stop to these goings-on. I'll show you pretty plainly, Miss Kate, that I mean to be obeyed, and that I'm mistress in my own house, and that I'll have no followers here — a lazy, good-for-nothing boy like that coming here and insulting an honest woman like me with all that rubbish about love and marriage, indeed."

She spoke in a shrill voice and with the greatest rapidity. Dan thoroughly enjoyed the effect which his mischievous words had produced, but now he burst out into a loud laugh,

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he was so tickled by her last allusion to love and marriage. This added fuel to the flames. Aunt Sarah now added action to her speech; she fell upon Dan, boxed his ears, and cuffed his head.

"I'll teach you to laugh at me, you vagabond," she shrieked; "get out of my sight, will you!"

Dan beat a hasty retreat to the garret where he slept, while poor Kate was left alone to endure the full wrath of her exasperated relative.

"And now what have you got to say for yourself, miss?" she cried, as she stood in a threatening attitude over her terrified niece.

"It's not true, indeed, aunt, what Dan has said. I am sure Martin"——

"I won't hear his name mentioned, Kate," and she lifted up her hand as if about to box her niece's ears.

"—— never sent any message of the kind," she stammered out.

"You persist in taking his part, you wicked, depraved girl! What a viper I have been cherishing all these past years! why your very looks betrayed you,—you turned red as fire when that fellow's name was mentioned. I'll put an end to all these underhand goings-on, cunning, deceitful hussy that you are!"

Kate burst into tears. She could not say a word; never had she seen her aunt in such a rage. Feeling that she would not believe a word she said in her defence, and that to reply would only irritate her the more, she took refuge in silence.

Aunt Sarah continued her fierce rebukes of Kate and wholesale denunciations of Martin, in which she seemed to include the male sex in general, till at last she peremptorily ordered her niece to go to bed.

Kate cried herself to sleep, dreading the measures her aunt might take in the morning. She was bitterly vexed with Dan for making all this mischief and so unnecessarily

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angering her aunt. He, meanwhile, was chuckling with delight over the fun he had enjoyed, and the rage he had excited in Aunt Sarah against Martin and Kate. However, as we have before stated, the one redeeming point in Dan's character was his affection for his sister, and when next morning, before his aunt appeared, he saw her pale face, and eyes red with weeping, he repented of last night's folly; he perceived his joke had gone too far: he was touched by Kate's gentle remonstrances, and promised he would confess to Aunt Sarah that the story about Martin was not true, and that he had only told it for a joke and to tease his sister.

When Aunt Sarah came down she looked black as thunder. Not a word was said during the whole of breakfast. Kate went into the shop as usual to her business. Finding himself alone with his aunt, Dan, summoning up all the courage at his command, stammered out, —

"Aunt, I'm very sorry for what I said last night."

"Sorry for what?" said his aunt, sharply.

"Why, sorry for what I said about Martin and Kate; I only said it for a joke; I didn't mean any harm, I'm sure."

"That's all very fine. I suppose Kate has been talking you over, to get you to deceive me, but I sha'n't be blinded by any of her artful ways, — as if I hadn't seen myself what was going on between her and that young scamp Martin" ——

"But it wasn't true, aunt, what I told you last night, I assure you. Martin didn't send Kate any message except that he was promoted; all the rest I made up just for a lark," Dan interrupted her.

"You lying, good-for-nothing vagabond, I should like to know when I am to believe you or not; most likely you spoke the truth last night and are telling lies now; a nice life you and your sister are leading me — two ungrateful brats that you are — after all I have done for you."

"But, aunt" —— said Dan.

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"Hold your tongue, and get out of my sight," she exclaimed, and fearing a repetition of the attack of last night, Dan darted through the shop into the street.

Aunt Sarah was very cross all day, and out of temper with everybody. She wanted to punish her niece, and stop all communication between her and Martin, but did not see exactly how to set about it.

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CHAPTER XII.

"THE STAR OF DEVON."

"Farewell . . .
Be prosperous in this voyage, as in all;
And may you light on all things that you love,
And live to wed with her whom first you loved."
— TENNYSON.

MARTIN and his father had now a busy time of it. Captain Archer had to superintend the shipping of the cargo on board his new vessel. Martin was constantly at work with him. In a fortnight's time "The Star of Devon" was to sail. Many of the "Diana's" old crew were anxious to continue under their old skipper; but a greater number were required to man the larger vessel, and the master could scarcely hope that all would be such steady men as those who sailed with him on his last voyage.

Dan's conduct since the events of our last chapter had been very unsatisfactory. He had taken up with the lowest company in the town; he had several times been the worse for drink, and one night was lodged in the police station for riotous and disorderly conduct. Next day he was brought before the magistrates, and discharged after the payment of a small fine, as it was his first offence, but severely reprimanded, and informed that the next time he appeared before the bench on a similar charge he would not get off so easily. When he returned to his aunt's she was furious with him for his conduct. She was not going to have a discharged criminal lodging under her roof. He might take himself off, and find a home elsewhere if he could. Kate pleaded hard for her brother, but in vain.

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Aunt Sarah was inexorable; moreover, she was too irritated with her niece to listen favorably to any request she might make. Consequently Dan, now an outcast from her house, had to seek a lodging, which he found in a low part of the town, among the worst characters. Here in a few days he learned more evil than in months before. The bad seed fell on congenial soil, and grew up in a plentiful harvest of noxious weeds, as the sequel will prove. All Kate's remonstrances were in vain. She longed for the time when her brother would be at sea again, for on board ship he could not be exposed to worse temptations than he now was on shore. Of Martin she saw nothing, for her aunt kept a sharper look-out than ever, even accompanying her to church, in order to prevent the young people from meeting. The poor girl therefore had a sorry time of it.

Dan's disorderly conduct having come to the ears of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, they refused to promote him to be an able seaman. At this he was so angry that at first he vowed he would never go in one of their ships again. His sister, however, who still hoped that under Captain Archer, and in the companionship of Martin, he might be reformed, prevailed on him to sail in "The Star of Devon."

The day before that fixed for sailing, Martin was determined he would get a word with Kate, in defiance of her aunt. Since his conversation with Dan on the Hoe, he had easily guessed the reason of Aunt Sarah's increased dislike to him. He knew Dan's love of mischief-making, and felt certain he had told his aunt that secret of his love to Kate, which he had then wormed out of him; in fact, Dan had once hinted as much to him. Martin knew that it was Kate's business to open the shop in the morning before Aunt Sarah made her appearance, so he chose that time of day to snatch a few words of parting.

When that morning Kate removed the shutters, she started when she saw Martin standing outside the shop,

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evidently waiting to speak to her. She went at once to the door and opened it noiselessly.

"Kate," whispered Martin, eagerly, "I've just come to say good-by. As I don't want to get you into a scrape with your cross aunt, I must be quick; but we sail to-morrow, and I couldn't go away without trying to see you once more."

"I heard you were to sail to-morrow, Martin," said Kate, changing color and with more constraint in her manner than usual; "you know it's not my fault that we have not met oftener."

"I understand all about it, Kate; Dan let out that he'd been making mischief, and I'm sure I've felt very sorry for you, with all you have to put up with from your aunt, and Dan, and"——

"Never mind me, Martin; I'm pretty well used to my aunt's ways, but Dan's bad conduct does cause me grief enough, I can assure you. He's got worse than ever latterly, as you know. Do be kind to him still, Martin, and see if you can't influence him right; he's always better after being much in your company."

"He's so unsteady and changeable, I almost despair of him, Kate, but for your sake I shall always be kind to him and help him when I can; you may make yourself easy on that point."

"I know you will, Martin," she replied, as the tears started to her eyes; "you've always kept your promises to me. How can I thank you enough for all the kindness you've already shown my poor brother, ungrateful as he has often been to you."

"Your gratitude makes up for it all, Kate," he replied, affectionately; "but I daren't stay longer; I think I heard your aunt drawing up her blinds; and if she caught sight of me here I know you'd suffer for it; so good-by, Kate; it'll be a long time before we meet again, for this voyage may last a year or more. You'll think of me sometimes,

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won't you, and pray to God to protect me in storms and dangers; and perhaps if He brings me back safe to Plymouth again, we shall manage to see more of each other than we've been able to do this time," he added, significantly.

"Good-by, Martin; God bless you!" she exclaimed, as she tried to suppress her tears; "and for my sake do what you can for Dan. But be off quickly — I hear my aunt moving about upstairs."

He pressed her hand warmly, and in a moment after was out of sight, — only just in time, for the next minute Aunt Sarah made her appearance in the shop.

The next day the "Star of Devon" sailed from Plymouth Sound for her long voyage to the West Indies. Her crew was a very mixed one. Dan was one of the last to come on board, and was plainly the worse for liquor. Martin soon discovered that he had far more to do than in the "Diana," and that promotion on board ship does not always mean less labor; but as he did not mind hard work, he was not the less happy, and set about his duties heartily and cheerfully. Dan, unfortunately, soon found congenial companions; the captain and mate foresaw they would have trouble enough with him before the voyage was over. They had squally weather through the Bay of Biscay, but the "Star of Devon" rode gallantly over the waves, and Captain Archer felt proud of his new ship and happy in the confidence which her owners had placed in him. Martin's practical knowledge, added to the attention he had given to the study of navigation when on shore, was a great help to his father, who plainly perceived that if he only continued as steady and persevering as he now was, he must rise early in life to the highest rank in the profession, for which he already showed such love and capacity.

Dan, jealous and angry because Martin had been promoted before him, was not long before he found a party

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among the crew to vex and annoy his old friend. That he was the captain's son was alone enough to make him unpopular; his steadiness, sobriety, and strict adherence to duty were additional reasons for his being disliked by lazy and dissolute fellows who shirked their work whenever they had a chance. Martin, however, did not allow himself to be vexed or put out of temper by the petty annoyances and spiteful tricks of Dan and his new allies; his heart was thoroughly in his work, and so long as they did not interfere with him in its performance he was indifferent to their actions.

The ship was becalmed on the equator; for several days and nights they had to endure a stifling heat which not a breath of air alleviated. The ocean stretched out around them like a vast expanse of glass, its surface unruffled by the smallest ripple. The sun from a cloudless sky darted upon them its fierce, dazzling rays, which scorched the decks and seemed to dry up the blood in their veins. They were all more or less tormented with thirst, greatly aggravated in the case of those who resorted to spirituous liquors to quench it. Irritable tempers were aggravated, and quarrels among the men were frequent and violent.

Dan was restless, ill at ease, and ready to pick a quarrel with any one. Such sultry heat he had never experienced before; it was enough, he said, to put anybody in a bad humor.

The men, with nothing to do, were most of them sitting or lying about the deck, smoking, gossiping, or mending their clothes. All longed for a breeze or for a refreshing shower of rain. Martin, though he suffered as much as the others from this hot, scorching atmosphere, felt that it was one of those things which every seaman must expect to endure, and therefore endeavored to make the best of it.

"Grumbling won't cure it," he remarked to Dan, who, prostrate on his back in the shade of a temporary awning

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which the men had stretched over the forecastle, had been pouring out bitter complaints to his shipmates, in which his vexation at the stifling weather was mingled with his grievances against the captain and officers, for the hard life they led the poor seamen who had been so deluded as to trust themselves on board the "Star of Devon." The sight of Martin, who had just come up, irritated Dan still more.

"All very well for you, the captain's son, who is allowed to do just what he likes, to tell us poor chaps not to grumble," moaned Dan; "you haven't to work half as much as we have."

"You don't seem to be doing much work at all events now, Dan," replied Martin.

"If there was any to do I should be put to it, I know, Martin; your father the skipper never spares me, — he's always had a grudge against me."

"You know as well as I do that's not true, Dan. You never have more than your share of work, and I'm sure I work a great deal harder than you."

"Oh, yes! you're a fine fellow; we all know Master Martin, able seaman, promoted above the heads of your elders and betters, all for the merit of being the son of the famous Captain Archer."

This speech raised a laugh among the idle fellows who were lying round Dan, followed by insolent remarks and mocking allusions to Martin's relationship to the captain, as well as to his steady conduct.

Martin, as was his wont, took no heed of these speeches; he turned away and looked over the bulwarks at the glassy sea, which seemed all aglow with the heat poured upon it by the vertical sun.

"I tell you what it is, Jim," said Dan, raising himself on his elbow, and turning to his neighbor on the deck, "I can't stand this any longer; what do you say to a dip in the sea? surely a bath would be refreshing, — it must be cooler in the sea than out of it."

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"Not much, Dan, I believe," said the other, lazily; "besides, the captain warned us yesterday against bathing, because of the sharks."

"The captain! always the captain, Jim!" said Dan, angrily. "Sharks, indeed! I don't believe there's one within a hundred knots of us; if there had been we should have seen 'em before this. No, the captain forbade us to bathe because he knew it would be the only means of getting cool and freshened up in this fiery hot weather."

"It's true enough, though, that there generally is sharks in these parts, Dan," said another man.

"Have you seen any, Tom?" asked Dan.

"No, I can't say that I have this time, but I have when I've been in these parts before."

"I don't believe then this is the season for them," said Dan, "and I mean to have a bath in spite of the captain. Who'll join me? Come on, you chaps."

Two men who found the heat unbearable, and hoped that a bath would cool them, expressed their intention of having a plunge, too.

"We must choose a time when neither the captain nor that precious son of his is on the look-out," remarked Dan; "we can strip in half a minute, get over the bulwarks, and let ourselves down by the bows, where we can easily climb on board again."

"I shall take a header from the deck," said one of the men.

"And the noise you make 'll bring up the captain, the mate, and the whole lot of 'em," remarked Dan.

"Yes; you're about right there, my lad. I didn't think of that. I'll take my bath more quietly, then."

"What fools you are!" said an older man; "you may be jumping into the very jaws of the sharks; take my advice and don't be so mad as to risk your lives in that 'ere water."

"Those are the fools who believe in sharks they've never

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seen," remarked Dan. "I mean to have my bath in spite of the sharks and the captain, too."

Martin, meanwhile, had gone below, and had heard nothing of this conversation. The other men, though convinced of the folly and danger of their shipmates' intention, took no further heed of them, so Dan and his friend went stealthily off to a retired part of the forecastle, where they stripped, and after a cautious glance around to see if they were observed by the captain or officers, Dan proceeded to let himself down, clinging to the stays and ropes at the bows into the sea, and was quickly followed by Jim; the other man, having changed his mind, declined the bath. They dropped quietly into the water, being anxious to make as little noise as possible, and then swam off from the ship. Warm as the sea was they found it refreshing after the sultry heat of the ship.

"Ain't it jolly, Jim?" said Dan; "I wish we'd thought of it before."

"Yes; what a brute the captain is not to allow the men to bathe," replied the other; "they'd all be ever so much the better for it."

"Of course they would," said Dan.

They had already been some five or ten minutes in the water, their mates on deck were leaning over the bulwarks watching them. Suddenly the man who had warned them of the danger of bathing in those seas shouted out excitedly, waving his hands at the same time, —

"Swim for your lives, lads, — there is a shark close to you!"

Dan and his friend, who thought he was chaffing them at first, laughed aloud, and Dan replied, —

"I'm up to your game, Harry; you don't take us for such fools as to believe you"; but he turned round nevertheless, and saw the huge monster of the deep but a very few yards from him.

"It's true, Jim!" he gasped, "I see the shark!"

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"Splash the water as much as you can," roared the sailors from the deck; "that always frightens the sharks away."

All this sudden noise and excitement, the shouts from the deck, and cries of distress from the glassy surface of the sea immediately brought up the captain, the officers, and the rest of the crew who happened to be below. Martin was one of the first to reach the deck. To his horror he saw the two young men in the water, eagerly pursued by the shark. He recognized Dan at once, who was by no means a good swimmer, and whom terror was depriving of all nerve and presence of mind. He was gasping for breath, now wildly striking out with both arms and legs, now feebly beating the water as if all his strength had left him. His companion, an older, stronger, and bolder man, had already nearly reached the ship's side, but Dan seemed to make little progress, and the shark was plainly gaining on him.

"Lower the cutter at once!" cried the captain; "not a moment is to be lost to save the lad's life."

The men rushed to the boat; but before they reached it a splash was heard in the water, — all eyes turned in the direction whence the sound proceeded. The captain exclaimed, "What's that? Surely no man has been so mad as to plunge into the sea now; these two poor fellows have been punished severely enough for disobeying orders."

Scarcely had the words escaped his lips when a shout arose from the crew, who crowded the deck and hung over the bulwarks. "Bravo, bravo, Martin!" they cried. And now the captain, to his terror and dismay, beheld his son in the water, striking out boldly and swiftly to meet his friend, so closely pursued by the monster of the deep. Martin was a splendid swimmer at any time: now a heroic and generous ardor to rescue his friend from the jaws of the horrible shark seemed to give extraordinary strength and vigor to his movements.

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"Courage, Dan!" he cried; "only keep up for a moment, and I'll be with you." And he waved his sheath-knife, which he carried in his right hand, above his head, to prove to his friend that he had not come unarmed to help him.

At the sight of Martin swimming to meet him, Dan's spirits somewhat revived, and he struck out more boldly. Jim, meanwhile, had reached the ship, and was already climbing up her side. The captain, pale as death, gave his orders as calmly as possible. He knew how unequal the combat was; what a bare chance of escape for Dan and his beloved Martin from the open jaws of that monster. And when there was one shark, were there not probably more? Every instant he expected to see the huge head of another emerge from the smooth surface of the sea, or to behold his son devoured before his eyes by one of these ravenous beasts. He could only breathe a silent prayer to heaven: "O God! for Thy dear Son's sake, protect the lad," and trust that He who had inspired him with so generous a courage and so noble a spirit of self-sacrifice would guard and protect him through the deadly peril in which he had so bravely risked his life.

The men, meanwhile, hurled any objects they could lay hold on at the shark, but in this caution was needful, lest they should strike the swimmers instead of their foe. As yet they had touched neither, but the shouts they raised, the constant splashing of the water caused by the showers of missiles into it, seemed somewhat to frighten the shark, which, though evidently reluctant to relinquish the prey, so nearly within its grasp, hesitated, keeping its head for several seconds beneath the water; and on reappearing, did not seem to have gained much on its victim. All this was occurring in far less time than it takes to relate. Martin swimming rapidly had now attained the first and chief object of his heroic enterprise. He had placed himself between Dan and his pursuer; the former, therefore, unless there

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were other sharks about, was comparatively safe, and now Martin alone had to face the fearful monster. He had heard and read enough about sharks, and was acquainted with their immense strength and terrible voracity, but he had never seen one before, and the reality was certainly more horrible than even his imagination had depicted it. When the creature opened its enormous jaws, and he saw its double row of huge teeth, when it rolled its great, glassy, ravenous-looking eyes, the poor lad could not repress a shudder. Then the thought came to him that he was doing his duty, that he was trying to save the life of a fellow-creature — yes, the life of Kate's brother; and that though the danger was great, his heavenly Father would surely not suffer him to perish in the jaws of this awful monster — so he commended himself into His all-powerful hands. What he had to do now was to keep back the shark and cover Dan's retreat. He was face to face with the beast; he must wound it with his knife, if possible, attack it before it had time to seize him. The constant splashing which he kept up in the water — which he had read was the best means of keeping sharks at bay — had the effect of preventing the brute from seizing him in his mighty jaws; and now by a swift and skilful movement, Martin succeeded in getting to its side, took a desperate spring, and plunged his knife into its neck. In a moment the sea was reddened with blood. A shout of applause sounded forth from the ship, and from the crew of the boat, which meanwhile had been lowered, and was rapidly approaching the scene of action, pulled by all the strength of the lusty arms of the seamen.

The captain, whose feelings of horror and anxiety had reached a climax, but who still maintained an air of imperturbable calm, had the moment before Martin struck the shark rushed down below to seize his rifle, the thought having struck him that if he could only take a good aim he might shoot the monster in some vital part, and so end the conflict. When an instant after he reappeared on the deck

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and saw the blood mingled with the water, even he could not repress an exclamation of agony and despair. But the mate cried out to him at once, "Don't be alarmed, sir, Martin's all safe; he's just struck the shark with his knife, and that's only the beast's blood we see in the water."

"Thank God! thank God!" gasped the captain. "I thought my boy was already devoured."

The poor father had reached the deck at a most critical moment. The shark, smarting from the wound, was now infuriated against its heroic aggressor. It rolled over and over, lashing the water with its tail violently and agitating its glassy surface, so that Martin was thrown back some yards further from the ship and the approaching boat, the effort of whose crew was to place it between their brave young shipmate and his enemy. To this end they strained every nerve and muscle, but to their intense horror and to that of all who manned the deck, and shouted to them to pull hard, the fish was now making straight for Martin, who, though he boldly faced it and still waved his knife, was showing signs of exhaustion.

Already he felt the hot breath of the monster in his face, he could see the vast jaws which were so soon to enclose him, the huge teeth beneath which he was to be crushed. To God he commended his soul. But he would die fighting bravely to the last; if he must lose his life, he would sell it dearly. He was not so strong, he felt plainly, as when he struck the beast before, still he had a good amount of strength left, and now as the shark approached and opened its yawning jaws, he lifted up his arm to strike it in the mouth.

But at that moment a sharp report fell on his ear, the open jaws closed quickly, the monster did not advance, as he expected, to devour him. After that all became dark and confused,—he did not know what happened till he found himself in his berth on board the "Star of Devon," and his father sitting by his side.

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Let us return to the deck. The captain in an agony of suspense gazed down on the terrible scene below. He felt helpless to aid his son except by his prayers. The men in the boat he saw were doing their utmost, but when he perceived the distance that Martin had been thrown by the shark, he doubted if they could reach him before the monster did. It was an awful moment, — the life of his son, his only son, was hanging in the balance, and now he saw that his strength was giving way; he was, too, almost in the shark's jaws. He must act; it was the last hope, his only resource, though it was a desperate one. Praying for a steady hand and a sure aim he levelled his rifle; he was a first-rate shot, as had often been proved; but it was the story of William Tell over again, he *might* miss his aim, and slay his son. Ah! better then that he should perish by his father's bullet than be devoured by that ravenous beast.

He fired. At the very instant when the shark had opened its huge mouth to grasp its almost helpless prey, it was seen suddenly to close its jaws, and immediately afterwards to disappear, while at the same moment the boat had reached Martin, and six strong hands were lifting him into it. The captain's bullet had entered the shark's eye. His cool courage and sure aim had saved his son's life. Nothing more was seen of the monster except the blood, which for some time continued to discolor the water.

Dan had been picked up by the men in the boat before they reached Martin. The fright he had undergone seemed for the time to have deprived him of reason. He rolled his eyes wildly and uttered incoherent sounds. Martin's strength was completely exhausted, both from his desperate conflict with the shark, and from the terror and excitement of mind he had endured in those few minutes. He was quite unconscious when he was lifted on the deck.

"He'll come to — he's only fainted, sir," said the mate;

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"and no wonder, after what he's gone through! Ah! he's a fine fellow, captain, and you may well be proud of him."

The captain said nothing. His countenance — ghastly pale — still wore the marks of the terrible anxiety and suspense he had just passed through. Martin was laid in his berth; when restoratives were applied to him he slowly returned to consciousness. On opening his eyes they first fell on his father's anxious face; he seemed perplexed and bewildered; at last he said in a faint voice, —

"Father, is it you? Where am I? I am saved, then. I thought I had been devoured by the shark."

"No, my brave boy," said the captain, "we killed the shark just in time."

"How, father? When the shark was opening his jaws to devour me and I raised my knife to strike it again, the boat was some yards off — did the men get up in time to slay the beast?"

"No, Martin," replied the captain; "I shot the shark just at the moment when he was about to seize you in his teeth. Thanks be to the Lord, who heard my prayers, giving me — though I seemed to be trembling all over for your life — such a steady hand and so sure an aim."

"Thank God, indeed! but what a splendid shot you are, father — and Dan, where is he?"

"He's saved, and he owes his life to you, Martin," said the captain. "But what a trouble that scamp is! He's always getting us into some scrape. I wish I'd never consented to have him in my ship. But he shall be severely punished for disobeying my strict orders that no one was to bathe in these waters so infested by sharks."

"I should think, father, he'd been punished enough already by his fright," replied Martin.

"Maybe he has; we'll see," said the captain, with a sigh.

Martin soon recovered from the shock caused by his

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heroic encounter. All on board the ship applauded his brave conduct; there was not one dissentient voice among the crew. Deeds of pluck and daring cannot fail to call forth the admiration even of the worthless and dissolute, and Martin's noble and generous action was enhanced by the fact, which was apparent to all the men, that Dan latterly had never lost an opportunity of teasing and vexing him.

Dan did not recover from the effects of this adventure as rapidly as his brave deliverer had done. The excitement brought on a fever; that night he was raving in delirium. His life was plainly in danger.

In the evening the longed-for change of weather came at last. There was a heavy down pour of rain, followed by a refreshing breeze; once more the "Star of Devon" spread her sails to the wind, and darted swiftly over the waves of the blue Atlantic.

Three days had elapsed, and still Dan was no better. A merchant vessel like the "Star of Devon" did not carry a surgeon, and in cases of illness the patients had to trust to any knowledge of medicine possessed by the captain or officers, and to the care and attention of their shipmates.

Hamilton, the mate, understood more about sickness than the captain; he possessed a medicine-chest, and was in the habit of doctoring the men for the slight ailments from which they occasionally suffered while at sea; but he had never had such a severe case of illness to treat as Dan's. It was brain fever, he had little doubt; now he was wildly delirious, now utterly exhausted and apparently insensible. He treated him as well as his limited knowledge and the few drugs at his disposal allowed. Martin, at his own request, became his attendant, passing all the time he could spare from his duties beside his friend's bunk. He had promised Kate to look after her brother; besides, had not Dan and he known each other from

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childhood? Old affection therefore prompted him to do all in his power to help to save the life he had so recently rescued from the very jaws of death.

Many a night of weary watching had poor Martin to endure; often, too, after a hard day's work, for stormy weather had succeeded the dry and sultry calm. Dan, quite unconscious, did not recognize his kind nurse, though often in his ravings he pronounced his name; he even fancied he was pursued by the shark, and called on Martin to come and save him. Now and then, too, his sister's name would come to his lips, and in piteous tones he would implore her to bring him water, for he constantly suffered from burning thirst.

One morning, after a more than usually restless night, the mate found Martin sitting by his friend's side.

"You will wear yourself out, my lad, with this constant watching; I never saw you look so pale and worn. Hard work by day, when one gets a good night's rest after it, doesn't do a healthy man any harm; but to sit up night after night, and get no sleep, is more than the strongest can stand. I must put a stop to it. But how's Dan this morning?"

"No better, sir," replied Martin, sadly; "he's had a very bad night, but he's quiet now, as generally is the case in the morning."

"He looks worse than ever," said the mate. "Poor young chap, I don't expect he'll ever leave that bunk alive. Lazy, good-for-nothing fellow that he's been, one can't help being sorry for him now."

"So long as there's life there's hope, sir," replied Martin. "God grant he may yet be spared."

"Well, you haven't much to thank him for, Martin. If ever there was a case of following what the gospel tells us, to love our enemies, and do good to them that curse us, I have it before my eyes now," said the mate, emphatically.

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"No, no, Mr. Hamilton, don't call him my enemy — it was only his Irish ways; they ain't the same as us English, and must be judged differently."

"No, thank God, they're not the same, you're about right there, Martin; but come, I've arranged that you're to have a good rest to-day — your watch is supplied; go and lie down in your berth and sleep as long as you can; me and Turner 'll watch by this poor fellow, and don't you be uneasy about him; I'll take care he's not left alone."

"You're very kind, sir; and you'll see that the wet bandages on his head are changed very often, and that he has plenty to drink?" said Martin, anxiously.

"Never fear, Martin; and if any change for the worse comes on I'll call you."

"Thank you, sir; then I'll go, and glad enough I shall be for a few hours' sleep."

The mate, as soon as Martin was gone, examined the sufferer more narrowly; felt his pulse and forehead, and listened to his breathing. It struck him that the fever had well nigh run its course, and that a crisis was at hand,— a crisis which would either end in death or in a favorable turn. For more than an hour he sat beside him, then he fancied that his breathing was easier, and his forehead somewhat cooler. Summoning the second mate, he charged him to watch the patient carefully for a couple of hours, while he went to his work, and to call him if needful. When the time was up he returned to Dan's bunk, where he was pleased to find him in a quiet slumber, into which the second mate told him he had fallen about half an hour previous. His first impulse was to go and tell Martin, but he checked himself at once, for he wanted the lad to get as much sleep as possible, and dismissing Turner again sat by Dan's side.

He had not been there more than an hour when Martin appeared, looking much refreshed for the good sleep he had enjoyed.

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"How is he, sir?" he inquired, eagerly.

"Better. Decidedly better, Martin," said the mate; "don't you see he's sleeping now quite quietly? maybe the fever's passing off; if he don't have a delirious fit when night comes on, he'll be on a fair way towards recovery, so far as my experience goes, I may say."

"Thank God!" said Martin, "that's good news indeed."

"Now you may sit by him for a while, Martin. You've got the first watch to-night, I believe, and after that you must turn in. I'll see there's some one here to attend to him."

"But I shall be quite ready to come after my watch, sir," said Martin.

"No, you'll not sit up another night, I'm determined; you've had enough of that sort of work for the present; but now I must be off and you may take your turn."

There was no change in Dan's condition. Before Martin turned in after taking his watch on deck he went to see how he was; he found him still sleeping peacefully; the attack of delirium, then, had not come on. If the mate's opinion was right, then there was good ground for hope.

Next day, in the forenoon, Martin was again by his sick friend's side, who still slept on, but was getting restless. Martin had not been there long before, opening his eyes, he said in a faint voice,—

"Where am I?"

"You're in your bunk, Dan, on board the 'Star of Devon,'" said Martin, kindly.

Recognizing the voice, Dan turned his head and gazed into his friend's face—

"Why, Martin, is it you? I don't seem to know whether I'm alive or dead, awake or dreaming."

"You're alive, thank God! Dan, and just waking up—recovering, I hope, from a bad attack of fever," replied Martin.

"And the shark—then I was saved from it, and was it

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not by you, Martin?" he inquired, in an agitated and weak voice.

"Come, never mind about the shark, Dan — he was killed long ago. You mustn't talk now, you're too weak; you must be kept quite quiet, — lie still and I'll call the steward to fetch you a drink."

Delighted at this favorable change in his friend, Martin hastened to tell the mate and the steward; the latter at once got some soup ready for the invalid.

From that hour Dan speedily began to regain his health and strength. He was so weak from the effects of the fever that it was several days before he was able to leave his berth. Martin, whenever he was not on duty, would sit beside him, but it was from others that Dan learned the whole story of his friend's heroic action; how very nearly Martin had paid the forfeit of his own life in rescuing him, and how he had only been saved from the very jaws of the monster by the captain's well-aimed shot.

Dan was filled with admiration at Martin's brave, generous conduct, as well as with remorse for his own. How little had he merited such disinterestedness and heroic self-sacrifice! This was how Martin repaid him for the constant annoyances and petty persecutions to which he had subjected him during the voyage. He never lost an opportunity of expressing to his friend his deep penitence for his previous conduct, as well as his heartfelt gratitude for having saved his life.

"Ah!" he said to him one day, "ah, Martin, where should I have been now, had it not been for you? I should have been devoured by the shark, sure as fate."

"Thank God that He gave me strength and courage enough to rescue you," replied Martin; "you weren't fit to die, Dan, you know that, and now God has given you time to repent; you must try to live better, so as to be prepared should death again come upon you unawares."

"Yes, Martin, that's what I mean to do. When death

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stared me in the face all my sins came up before me, as it were; my conscience smote me terribly, and I felt that it was my own wilful disobedience of the captain's orders which had brought me into that desperate plight. All the solemn words, too, I had heard about the doom of those who are cut off in their sins and have to appear before the presence of God came into my mind and made me tremble. These thoughts terrified me quite as much as the nearness of that horrible monster."

Well, it'll be a lesson to you I hope you'll never forget, Dan. I can imagine what you felt, for perhaps I was nearer to death than you were, though I've been as near once before."

"Ay, you mean at Lisbon, Martin. I'd forgotten that. Now I remember all about it, and I had a great deal to do with that, too. Alas! what a bad, mischievous chap I am."

"I was more uneasy in my mind, then, Dan," continued Martin; "though to die by drowning isn't so bad as to be crunched up by the teeth of a shark. But the first time, I had just before fallen into sin, and though I hoped God would forgive me, like the prodigal son, yet I hadn't much confidence, though I tried to trust in His great mercy. This last time it was different; I knew I was doing my duty, and sinner as I felt myself to be, I gave myself up quietly into my heavenly Father's hands, leaving the result to him, and knowing that, whatever happened, all must be for the best."

"Well, I wish I could have felt like that, Martin. I fear I shall never be as good as you, however hard I try."

"Good, indeed!" said Martin, with a sigh. "I'm very far from that; I'm always doing wrong, and have ever to be on the watch lest I give way to sin."

"I've said so often that I meant to amend and turn over a new leaf that neither you nor any one else will believe me now, Martin, when I say it again," remarked Dan, sadly.

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"Well, that's true, certainly, Dan; but if you didn't trust so much to yourself, but really prayed to God for strength to withstand the evil one, there'd be more hope for you."

"I'll try to; that's what Kate's always telling me," replied Dan.

"When you're tempted to sin pray for the help of the Holy Spirit to fight against the tempter. Look upon him with as great fear and horror as you did on that shark the other day — it had only power over your body; the evil one is able to destroy both body and soul."

"That's true, very true, Martin; I'd never looked at it in that light. I'll do my best, God helping me, but I won't boast any more of what I mean to do."

"That's right, Dan; there'll be more chance for you then," said Martin, cheerfully, as he turned away to his watch.

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CHAPTER XIII.

HONORS FOR MARTIN.

"The victories of right
Are born of strife.
There were no day were there no night,
Nor without dying, life.
There only doth right triumph, when the wrong
Is mightiest and most strong.
There were no good indeed, were there no ill." . . .
— ODE OF LIFE.

"How far that little candle throws his beams!
So shines a good deed in a naughty world."
— SHAKESPEARE.

DAN mended rapidly now, and was soon able to perform his duties again. The captain had spoken to him very severely about his act of disobedience which had so nearly caused the loss of his own and Martin's life. Dan had expressed the deepest penitence, and proved its reality by the extreme steadiness of his conduct. Both at sea and at the various ports at which they touched Dan's conduct was irreproachable. He avoided associating with bad characters, and always, when it was possible, chose Martin for his companion. He had taken an early opportunity of writing to Kate, and told her the thrilling story of how nobly Martin, at the risk of his life, delivered him from the shark. After this, he wrote, he felt bound to Martin for all his life; no power on earth should ever induce him to worry or vex him again. Martin, too, sent a letter to Kate from the same port. He said that Dan had had a narrow escape and a long illness, from which he had only just recovered. He wrote nothing about his own part in the adventure, only stating that he had done his best to keep his promise to

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Kate and look after her brother, and nurse him as well as his duty allowed, through his long attack of fever.

The West Indian Islands were visited. Then the "Star of Devon" rounded Cape Horn, encountered several severe storms and one terrific hurricane. Valparaiso and other South American ports were touched at, cargoes landed and shipped. Officers and crew had a busy time of it. The homeward voyage then began. Fresh cargoes were taken in at the West Indies. They called at the Azores and Lisbon; Martin could not repress a shudder on passing through the street of that city where he had yielded to temptation, and fallen into a trap of thieves and vagabonds.

With a fair wind and a clear sky the "Star of Devon" ploughed the tossing waves of the Bay of Biscay, and then, after rather more than a year's absence, anchored once more in Plymouth Sound.

Messrs. Willis & Dobbs expressed great satisfaction at the manner in which the skipper had acquitted himself during this voyage. Everything on board his ship was in the greatest order. Discipline had been maintained, yet the large majority of the men were thoroughly contented, and praised the master for his kindness and consideration. No accident had happened to the ship, the cargo, or the crew. There could not have been a more prosperous or better-conducted voyage than that made by the "Star of Devon" for the first time under Captain Archer.

The men had not forgotten Martin's brave deed of heroism; some of them had vowed it should not remain unnoticed. A representation, therefore, quite unknown either to Martin or his father, was made to the Royal Humane Society, who, after investigating all the circumstances of the case, ordered that Martin Archer should be presented with the Society's medal, expressing a wish that, to encourage similar deeds of valor among young seamen, it should be given publicly by the Mayor of the town.

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At an early date the ceremony took place. The Mayor, a pompous individual, arrayed in his robes of office, with the Aldermen and town Councillors on either side of him, at a public meeting in the Guildhall, fastened the medal on Martin's breast. He made a long, grandiloquent speech, in which the magnanimous and heroic conduct of the young man before him was lauded to the skies, and many allusions were made to the bold seamen and brave heroes which Plymouth had produced in former days, to whom Martin was pointed out as a most worthy successor. Other similar speeches followed.

Dan, of course, was present. He was pointed out as the victim whom the heroic Martin had rescued from the jaws of the shark. It was a proud moment for Captain Archer. His mother, too, was there, and rejoiced to hear all the praises of her darling grandson.

Even Aunt Sarah had been touched when she heard the story of the shark. "Such a good-for-nothing fellow as Dan," she remarked, "was always getting into trouble"; and she never thought Martin was much better. Boys and young men were all alike, wild, and up to mischief; still, she wasn't going to be unfair. There was no doubt Martin had done a brave deed in saving her nephew's life. There was perhaps a great deal too much fuss being made about it, and the young man, who always had a very good opinion of himself, would now be unbearably proud and conceited. But on the condition that she would promise not to encourage his visits, she allowed Kate to go with her brother to the Guildhall to witness the foolish ceremony — as she called it — a lot of pampered, old, retired tradesmen, sitting in a row in large gowns and gold chains, talking stuff and nonsense, and fixing a trumpery piece of metal on a boy's jacket. Well, if people liked to waste their time and breath over such follies, they were welcome! For her part, she'd stay at home and mind her shop.

Martin himself was glad when it was over, — he felt very

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uncomfortable all the time. He didn't know which way to look when all these fine speeches were made about him; he felt he had only done his duty, and he was quite ready to do the same again under similar circumstances. He changed color very often, and almost wished himself in the water fighting with the shark again, when he felt how many eyes were fixed upon him.

However, the ceremony came to an end at last. Cheers rent the air as Martin and his father left the building to return to their home. Plymouth was justly proud of the honor which her brave son had conferred upon her.

Martin made good use of the time he had at his disposal on shore; he studied hard, and successfully passed an examination through which he obtained a mate's certificate.

He was young to be a mate, as he was not yet twenty, but his knowledge of seamanship and navigation, as well as his excellent character, told in his favor. Messrs. Willis & Dobbs therefore informed him that next voyage he was to fill the post of second mate in the "Star of Devon."

All his friends rejoiced at his promotion, and warmly congratulated him, Dan among the number. His devotion and affection for Martin had not in the least abated since they had come on shore. Through his and Kate's influence he had been fairly steady, too, though he occasionally frequented his old haunts and associated with his former loose companions. It was decided by the shipowners that on this voyage he should sail as an able seaman.

Martin and Kate met occasionally. Aunt Sarah was unable to prohibit, as she gladly would have done, all intercourse between the young people. As Dan now took his sister's side, and did all in his power to promote their interviews, it was harder for Aunt Sarah to interfere, and now they always met on Sundays, and sometimes once in the week as well, but Martin was strictly forbidden to enter the shop. Dan made no secret of his wish that Martin

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should one day become his brother-in-law. He constantly irritated his aunt, and caused the blushes to rise to his sister's face, by alluding to this event as certain, though it might be very distant. Aunt Sarah would get very angry, storm at Dan, scold her niece, and make by no means complimentary remarks on Martin; she would talk about "calf love, childish folly, the inconstancy of sailors, who had sweethearts at every port they touched at," and wind up by holding herself up as a model of propriety, an example which it would be well for her if Kate were to follow; for she knew if she did not that the day must come when she would bitterly repent having anything to do with young men, who were deceitful, treacherous, hard-hearted — in fact, everything that was bad — as she knew from experience.

However, the only time she saw Martin she was more civil than she had ever been before, so that the lad began to think she had relented towards him, and might at last, perhaps, regard with a favorable eye his attentions to her niece.

He mentioned this to Dan one day, who replied, —

"Don't deceive yourself, Martin; she happened to be in an uncommon good humor that day. I'd just been telling her the story about the shark, and I praised you up so she couldn't fail but be civil to you. You should only hear her go on when I give a hint about you and Kate's liking for each other, and you'd soon learn the truth."

"The less you say about that, Dan, the better for us both," replied Martin.

"Why, it'll be some day, sure as fate; and as she can't prevent it, isn't it best she should get used to look upon you and Kate becoming man and wife,— and not such a long time off either,— you may be a captain in two or three years' time, who knows? and well able to keep a wife and family."

"Come, come, Dan, that's hardly likely; you're looking

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at matters on their brightest side; perhaps Kate won't have me, after all," said Martin, with a smile.

"Won't have you, ha! ha! you believe it, don't you? Why, she's been over head and ears in love with you ever since she saw you for the first time, when you both were in your cradles," cried Dan, laughing; "but I've got a piece of news for you, Martin. I don't know whether you'll be pleased to hear it or not. I've got a berth on board the 'Princess,' and sha'n't be your shipmate next voyage."

"I am sorry and surprised, Dan. What made you do that?" asked Martin.

"Well, they're short of hands, and the ship must sail at the end of the week, while the 'Star of Devon' won't start for some time yet. Willis & Dobbs offered me the place, and as I've nothing to do in Plymouth except get into mischief now and then I thought I'd better accept it."

"What's Kate saying to it, Dan?" asked Martin.

"I haven't told her yet, but she won't like it; she'd rather I'd sail with you, because she thinks you'd keep me steady. But of late I've steadied wonderfully, you know, Martin, and there isn't much danger of my taking to wild ways again, especially when I'm at sea, with plenty of work."

"Well, don't be too confident, Dan; that's one of your failings," said Martin.

"Come, Martin, you're hard upon me. I wasn't exactly boasting, but you can't deny I've been very quiet and well-behaved since we've been ashore. Haven't I gone to church regular, too, on Sundays, and once with you to the Bible class in the week? I promised Mr. Newberry, too, to behave well in the future, and he told me himself how pleased he was to observe I had become so steady."

"Nobody's more pleased than I am, Dan; but don't trust too much to your own strength; 'Let him that

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thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall'; you know how easily you are led astray by others."

"It doesn't follow because I have been before I shall be again, now that I am older and more determined to do what's right," said Dan.

"If you really pray to God to keep you in the right way, He will uphold you and not suffer you to fall,—but it'll be a hard struggle, Dan, for one of your easy disposition. I know what you will have to bear, for I have felt it myself, and, alas! yielded to it, as you know."

"Come, Martin, don't look at the dark side.—Now I must be off. I've plenty to do to-day and to-morrow. I'll see you again before I sail—good-by for the present."

"Good-by Dan,—God bless you," said Martin, sadly.

He could not help fearing that with Dan's unstable character he would soon go wrong again, especially if he had no steady companions to help to keep him straight.

Kate, too, was bitterly grieved when she heard of the sudden step her brother had taken. She remonstrated with him in vain; he said his decision was irrevocable—he had given his word to Willis & Dobbs that he would sail in the "Princess" as an able seaman, and already signed the necessary articles.

Aunt Sarah expressed her satisfaction that peace and quietness would so soon be restored to her house by Dan's departure.

Captain Archer shared his son's views about Dan's future; at the same time he hardly regretted that he was not to form one of his crew next voyage. He had got into so many scrapes himself, and been the cause of so much trouble and danger to Martin, that his absence would be rather a relief to his mind than otherwise.

So, in a couple of days' time after his last conversation with Martin, Dan sailed in the "Princess." With him were a few of his old mates from the "Star of Devon." The captain, too, was an acquaintance of his; though a good

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seaman he was a hasty and ill-tempered man. His sister and Martin went on board the ship to see Dan off. He was lavish in promises and good resolutions, which only made them more apprehensive lest he should once more relapse into his previous wild and unsteady ways.

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CHAPTER XIV.

WRECKED.

"O the vastness! O the terror!
O the launching on the sea!
Sailing dangerous, tempest threatening, —
Is there *no* help? *Must* it be?
Even so: the Admiral's flagship
This same way hath sailed before,
Leading to that waveless harbor —
Leading to that stormless shore."

— DR. NEALE.

ANOTHER voyage, not so long as the previous one, was successfully accomplished by the "Star of Devon." Martin as second mate acquitted himself as well as he had done as an able seaman.

Immediately on his return Messrs. Willis & Dobbs offered him the post of first mate on board his father's old ship, the "Diana," which was about to sail within a week. That such a good chance of speedy promotion ought not to be lost was felt by both Martin and his father, much as they regretted being separated. The captain hoped, too, that ere long his own first mate would be promoted to the command of a ship; then Martin could step into his place. The offer was therefore accepted, and as first mate on board the "Diana" Martin sailed for the Levant. He found his berth by no means an easy one; the captain was a sour-tempered man, who was neither liked nor respected by the crew. Martin's youth at first suggested to the crew that he would probably be wanting in both firmness and experience, but in this they soon found that they were mistaken. From the first he made it

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plain that his orders must be obeyed, and soon gave practical proofs that his knowledge and experience were much superior to his years; he had a hard time of it during the two voyages he made as chief mate of the "Diana," but it was useful to him, nevertheless; he learned the necessity of coolness and command of temper, both how to obey and how to command, — the discipline though stern was wholesome and beneficial.

Thus another year passed away. On returning from his first voyage in the "Diana" he found his father absent from Plymouth. Kate welcomed him affectionately, but she gave him no good news of Dan; he had been home a few weeks previously, and seemed to have fallen back into all his old bad ways. There had been a terrible scene between him and his aunt one night when he had come home drunk. Notwithstanding all Kate's entreaties, she had turned him out of doors and forbidden him to enter her house again; consequently he had taken up his abode in a low lodging-house, and associated only with the most degraded and dissolute companions. He had sailed again in the "Princess" for the Mediterranean; as the voyage was to be a short one Kate expected him back ere very long, — to this she looked forward rather with fear than pleasure, for in his present state of mind she did not know to what depths of vice or crime her poor brother might not sink.

Martin was sad and disappointed, though hardly surprised, to hear this lamentable account of his old shipmate; neither was he able to give his sister much hope or comfort on the subject. They could only pray that he might be brought to see the folly of his ways, and ere it was too late turn aside from the road which was rapidly leading him to ruin into the paths of uprightness and virtue.

Notwithstanding the persistent opposition of Aunt Sarah, Kate and Martin managed frequently to meet during the few weeks which the latter spent at Plymouth. Now, for

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the first time, Martin told Kate plainly that he loved her, and hoped one day to make her his wife. She replied that she had always loved him, as he well knew; in fact, their affection had been mutual since they played as children together. He got good pay now, and was saving money; even if he were not promoted to the command of a ship, he thought that as chief mate he would, in two years' time, be able to marry, and that it would be as well for Aunt Sarah to be, as gently as possible, informed of the fact. Kate said she had long ago taken it for granted, and was constantly reproaching her for her folly in encouraging Martin's addresses, but that, God willing, she meant one day to be Martin's wife, — she would take an opportunity of informing her kindly but firmly. Neither of them must forget, she added, the debt of gratitude she owed her aunt, who had brought her up and maintained her since her mother's death; though Aunt Sarah had a bad and irritable temper, and was full of prejudices, she was a good woman at heart, and she did not wish needlessly to wound or vex her.

"Very true, Kate," replied Martin; "but you must remember, too, that you have been invaluable to your aunt in helping her to keep the shop; without you she must have taken a girl to assist her. You keep all her accounts and write her orders. She would never have got on as she has done had you not been at her elbow."

"I know, Martin — and that is the very reason why the thought of losing me vexes her so greatly — when I go she must have a shop-girl."

"She must have made enough money to give up business and retire, I should think," remarked Martin.

"Very likely; but she won't do that, I know. I wish she did not dislike you so much, Martin, but she always has done, from what she foresaw would one day be the case. Since you saved Dan's life so bravely she has been a little more civil to you."

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"Yes, Kate, she has; but I don't mind — I'm accustomed to her ways. And now I'm grown up to be a man she can't treat me as roughly as when I was a boy. She's always given it to be understood that she dislikes every one of my sex, and so I don't stand alone."

"Well, perhaps she'll look on you more kindly some day, Martin; I should feel much happier if she were reconciled to our union."

A few days after this conversation Martin sailed on his second voyage in the "Diana," and did not return for nearly six months.

He found Kate in great trouble. "The Princess" had arrived in Plymouth some weeks before, but Dan was not on board. From some of the crew she had learnt that he had left the ship at Malta, where every search had been made for him, but in vain. He had latterly been on very bad terms with the captain and mate, as he was constantly getting into trouble for idleness and insubordination. In all probability, Kate was told, he had got a berth on one of the large vessels which call at Malta on their way to India and Australia. This information did not console Kate; she feared the worst for her brother. Surely if he were alive he would have written to her; but weeks and months passed away, and still she received no tidings of him.

Martin comforted her by expressing his opinion that Dan was too ashamed of himself to write. He did not think he was dead, but feared that he had gone from bad to worse, and was associated with a vicious set of companions, from whom it would be hard for him, even if he had the inclination, to break loose. God alone could touch his heart, rouse his slumbering conscience, and make him see his sin and danger. To Him they must pray to have mercy on the erring and lost one.

Martin had scarcely been a week in Plymouth before the "Star of Devon" arrived, and he had the pleasure of wel-

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coming his father. They had never been separated for so long a time, and had naturally much to tell each other, Captain Archer had again made a most successful voyage to the West Indies and South America. The day after his arrival the shipowners informed him that his first mate, Hamilton, was promoted to be master of the "Princess," and that Martin might therefore fill his post as first mate on board the "Star of Devon." This was good news indeed to both father and son.

Although Martin felt he had learned independence and experience during the two cruises he had made as chief mate of the "Diana," yet he had been obliged to put up with a good deal both from the skipper and the crew. As the former had no respect for religion, he never checked blasphemous talk or profane language among the men, who used it freely enough, especially when they found how obnoxious it was to the chief mate, whom all but a few disliked for his steadiness, sobriety, and strict devotion to duty. Martin, naturally quick tempered, was now and then betrayed into angry expressions and hasty actions, of which he had cause to repent subsequently. To catch that Methodist of a first mate tripping, however slightly, was always made the most of by the crew, and poor Martin had to bear in silence many a mocking word and sneering laugh, which in some instances he felt he had by his imprudence drawn upon himself; but more bitter still to endure was the thought of the evil done to his soul by these falls, and the ground lost in the Christian life, which even heart-felt repentance does not at once regain. Now, however, he looked forward to having a quieter time of it. He did not of course expect to encounter no hardships or difficulties as chief mate of the "Star of Devon," any more than he did to have smooth sailing during the whole voyage, but at all events he and his father would be of one mind, and he would not have to stand out alone against master and crew, as frequently had been his fate on board the "Diana."

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This time the "Star of Devon" was to take in the greater portion of her cargo at the London docks, which would occupy ten days or a fortnight; she was then to sail for Plymouth to receive the remainder. Captain Archer was in very good spirits: the shipowners had spoken in the highest terms of his son, — they said that for so young a man he had acquitted himself wonderfully well, and shown a knowledge of his profession which gave hopes of his becoming one day a first-rate captain; they hinted, too, that he was thoroughly capable of obtaining a master's certificate, though for another year or two his youth would be against him, — otherwise they would be quite willing to trust him with the command of one of their ships. The captain was naturally proud of his son, to whose promising career he looked forward with happy anticipation. He knew all about his affection for Kate, which met with his warmest approval; he was well aware that nothing was more fitted to keep a young man steady than a life-long attachment of this kind; he had known Kate from a child, and how worthy she was of Martin's love and devotion. After he and his son had made a few more voyages together he hoped to welcome her as a daughter to his home. His mother, too, who was getting old and feeble, was also looking forward to having a bright, cheerful companion in Kate, so greatly needed in her long solitudes during the frequent absences of her son and grandson.

Aunt Sarah, very reluctantly and with anything but a good grace, was beginning to see that she would have to submit to the inevitable: that she could not force Kate to pass her whole life with her against her inclinations; all her efforts were therefore directed to putting off the evil day to as distant a date as possible; she never lost any opportunity of depicting the marriage state in the darkest colors. The trials and sufferings of a sailor's wife, the long absences of the husband, the constant dangers to which he was exposed, the probability of his early finding a watery grave,

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or if that were not his fate, the likelihood, owing to the fickle character of seamen in general, of his deserting his wife, or at all events ill-treating her, were described in the gloomiest and most graphic language which Aunt Sarah could command. Day after day Kate was treated to these dreary pictures of the sad destiny which her own obstinacy was preparing for her, followed by severe rebukes for her folly, self-will, and ingratitude in desiring to forsake her comfortable home, prosperous position, and benevolent relative who had, since death deprived her of a mother's care, provided a roof to shelter her, and supplied her with every want.

It was only when her aunt alluded to her ingratitude that Kate felt any compunction; her tormentor, perceiving this, constantly harped upon that string. Kate not only expressed her gratitude by earnest and solemn words, but never lost an opportunity of proving it by her zeal and attention to her aunt's business, and devotion and kindness to her in every possible way. When Captain Archer and his son bade farewell to their friends at Plymouth, they remarked that it would be a very short absence this time; they were only sailing to London, and would return in less than three weeks to complete the lading of the ship.

With a fair wind and fine weather the "Star of Devon" safely reached the London docks; and all hands were now busily employed in shipping the cargo, which was a large and varied one; from early morning till late at night both captain and mate superintended this work.

It was a few days over a fortnight since sailing from Plymouth when the "Star of Devon" left the docks and proceeded to Gravesend; here she waited a few hours for the tide to turn, and then continued down the Channel. It was late in the month of November; the sky was thick and murky, the mercury was falling rapidly, the wind was from the north-east, there was every indication of a heavy gale;

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so unfavorable indeed was the outlook when the captain gave orders to weigh anchor at Gravesend that he hesitated for a moment, doubting whether it would not be best to wait for the next tide; however, he remembered that he had strict orders to reach Plymouth as quickly as possible; probably the weather would not be worse than what he had repeatedly experienced, and should the gale be a very heavy one from the north-east, he could at all events take shelter in the Downs till its fury had subsided. He had not himself had much experience in Channel navigation, but he trusted implicitly to the pilot, who bore an excellent character, and seemed to know the exact position of every shoal and sandbank between Gravesend and Beachy Head. There are few more dangerous bits of sea than the estuary of the Thames and the Straits of Dover; the space between the Kent and Essex coasts, from Margate to Harwich, is full of dangerous sandbanks, while more to the eastward, within sight of Ramsgate, are the dreaded Goodwin Sands, on which so many a gallant ship has been utterly lost, and her brave crew has perished. Vessels which have weathered the Atlantic gales, battled successfully with the mighty waves of the Bay of Biscay, whose passengers and crew are already in sight of the white cliffs and green fields of Old England, rejoicing in perils passed, and home all but within reach, have met here with greater dangers than any incurred during their whole voyage, and suffered shipwreck, and often found a watery grave, close to the very shores of their native land. But if this strip of sea is sown with perils, the shores on either side are famous for bold hearts and strong arms, who man the lugger and the lifeboat, and bravely risk their lives to save the unhappy victims of these fatal shoals.

The "Star of Devon," then, left her safe moorings at Gravesend, and in the teeth of the gale slowly sailed towards the Nore. Off Sheerness the sea was rolling heavily, the wind blowing fiercely, and they had considerably to shorten

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canvas. The sky was of a dull, leaden hue, and as they were reaching the Nore lightship a violent snowstorm came on, half blinding the men on the look-out, and freezing them to the very bones. It was about four o'clock in the afternoon, and was already growing dark. The captain and mate were standing together at the forecastle head, straining their eyes through the snow and fog, scarcely able to stand against the force of the north-easter, while the ship labored heavily, rolling and pitching on the wild, storm-tossed sea.

"We shall have a very dirty night, Martin," said the captain.

"No doubt of it, father; what a heavy sea is running! just look at the Nore lightship — every now and then it is buried in the waves," replied the mate.

"I begin to wish I hadn't sailed to-day, but waited till the gale had blown itself out," said the captain. "In fact, I shouldn't have hesitated, had I not received that telegram from Willis & Dobbs last night, urging me to lose no time in reaching Plymouth."

"Oh, we shall weather the gale all right, father. We've seen worse weather than this many a time," said Martin, cheerfully.

"Yes, Martin; but it is not the gale I mind so much as this thick weather and blinding snowstorm in a sea so full of shoals and sandbanks as this is. I'd rather be out in the Atlantic than here, in this sort of weather."

"But the pilot's a first-rate fellow, father; he's been used to this sea and shore all his life — he knows every inch of the course, and said just now he could find his way in the blackest night and the heaviest sea."

"Very true, very true, Martin," replied the captain, somewhat anxiously; "still the best and most experienced pilot may be deceived sometimes, and it doesn't follow because he's never got into trouble yet that he never will."

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At that moment the pilot came up to the pair; he was so muffled up that his eyes alone were visible.

"What do you think of the weather, Mr. Watson?" asked the captain.

"A very foul night, captain; we shall have sharp squalls and heavy seas; it'll be precious dark, too, after sunset."

"Yes; with a dense fog and a snowstorm into the bargain," remarked the mate.

"With the wind as it is, veering from north to north-east and east, we sha'n't be at the North Foreland before daybreak, I reckon," said the captain.

"Bless your soul! no," replied the pilot, "we shall barely get to Margate Roads by that time."

"That's not cheering, Mr. Watson," said the skipper; "a terrible long night we shall have of it, then; how dark it is already!"

"Yes; there's more snow ahead of us, captain — those clouds yonder are as black as night."

With anxious faces, and eyes straining through the fog and sleet, the captain and mate now paced the deck, now stood at the forecastle. When, at six o'clock, four bells sounded, the captain and pilot went down to the cuddy to tea, while Martin continued on the lookout. The pilot said he had only to keep on a straight course ahead and watch sharply against colliding in the fog with other vessels, especially to beware of steamers, and it would be smooth sailing enough.

The captain was soon on deck again at the mate's side.

"Now, Martin," he said, "go down to tea. Then turn in and get a sleep till you relieve the starboard watch at eight o'clock. I don't mean to turn in at all such a night as this; my place'll be on deck till I see daylight again."

"And my place will be at your side, father," said Martin, resolutely.

"All right, Martin; after eight bells," said the captain,

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"you have the port watch, but it's the second mate's watch now, and after the hard day's work you've had you may as well get some rest now, especially as the pilot says there's nothing out of the way here to cause alarm."

"There's fog enough and driving sleet, as well as half a gale of wind to make us extra careful," said Martin; "but if you wish it, father, as I mean to keep on deck through every watch till seven bells to-morrow morning, I'll turn in for an hour after tea, because I shall be fresher afterwards."

"That's right, Martin," said his father, cheerfully, and the first mate left the forecastle and went down to the cuddy.

The pilot, accustomed to bad weather of every kind, took matters far more easily. After a leisurely meal he indulged in a pipe and several glasses of grog beside the cuddy fire, and seemed to take no little pleasure in spinning terrible yarns about wrecks in the Channel during fogs and snowstorms, in which all hands on board perished, to the steward, who was a nervous man, and, moreover, had never been in the Channel before.

At last, however, after a growl at the weather, he began to muffle himself up and put on his oilskins; he knew he was in for a night of it, and a very dirty night it was going to be; so, after grunting out a rather surly "Good-night" to the steward, he slowly went up the companion and emerged on the deck.

"Well, captain, how are you getting on?" he said.

"We're not making much way, pilot, with such a gale as this from E.N.E., and the snow's quite blinding — it pricks one's face like needles; I never found it such hard work to keep a look-out in my life before, and all the men say the same."

"It *is* dirty, there's no mistake, captain," said the pilot, as he turned to have a look at the compass.

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He ordered the course to be kept more to the "nor'ward"; he said in such weather he preferred the Prince's, which is the outer, to the Queen's Channel, which is nearer to the Kentish coast. The captain was of a different opinion, but he gave way at once to the pilot, who had far greater experience and knowledge of Channel navigation.

When, at eight o'clock, Martin came to the forecastle head, the ship was exposed to the full fury of the gale, which was hourly increasing in violence — the sea ran mountains high, the waves every now and then dashing over the decks and almost throwing the vessel on her beam ends; at the same time there was no diminution in the snowstorm, while the darkness was so thick that the men could not see each other as they stood side by side, the only lights being the feeble and flickering beams of the ship's lamps, which were every now and then almost entirely obscured by the snow which clung around them. The cold was piercing, the icy wind penetrating through the thickest clothing, all the more painful to those who were drenched to the skin by the seas which dashed over the vessel.

The wind varied to every point of the compass between east and north. When it blew more from the nor'ward, the ship, even with the very short canvas she carried, was borne swiftly along by its violence, but when it shifted to the eastward she labored heavily, scarcely any progress at all being made. When, at midnight, the watch was relieved, Martin would not hear of turning in — he would not leave the deck for a moment. By the faint light of the lamp over the compass he noted his father's anxious face; there was an uneasy look, too, about the pilot, which filled him with apprehension. After examining the compass, he said he must go below and have a look at the charts. They were spread for him on the cuddy table; he bent over them eagerly, placing his finger on the spot

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where he thought they now were, and then striking his forehead with his hand as if in perplexity. Robinson, the second mate, and the steward stood beside him and held out the charts. The latter was pale as death with terror; the former, a bold, stout-hearted young man, could not conceal his anxiety. When he came on deck again he whispered to Martin,—

"There's something wrong with that 'ere pilot; I believe the fog and snowstorm's quite dazed him, and that he doesn't altogether know where we are."

"No, Sam, that can't be; he's a thoroughly trustworthy man, — he'd know how to keep a ship in her right course in the blackest night. Why, he spends his life on these seas and has never got into trouble yet," replied Martin.

"So he says, Martin, but if you'd seen him over the charts just now as I did, you'd have been of my opinion — a man who knew for certain he was in the right course would not look and act as he did; there he is now, bending over the compass, with his face almost touching it, — see how perplexed and anxious he seems!"

"Well, such a gale as is blowing now, with all this snow and mist, is enough to make any one very cautious, Sam; I don't wonder if the pilot feels uneasy," said Martin, looking towards the compass in the contemplation of which the pilot was still absorbed.

Though Martin did not confess it, he shared the second mate's apprehensions. He now went up to his father, who was standing on the poop, and told him what Robinson had said, and that he, too, could not help fearing that the pilot was not confident of their being in the right course. The captain, who looked more anxious and careworn than his son had ever seen him before, replied, —

"To tell you the truth, Martin, I believe he's as bewildered as I am by this snow, mist, and darkness. When one has a good pilot on board of course one trusts more to his judgment than to one's own, but if I'd acted according

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to what I thought for the best myself I'd have anchored at the Nore, and I'd have preferred the Queen's to the Prince's Channel. But I must speak to him at once."

The captain and mate went up to the pilot, who was still staring at the compass.

"Well, Mr. Watson," said the former, in as calm a tone of voice as he could command, "how are you getting on? It's blowing harder and is darker than ever. Our course is all right, I hope?"

The pilot started, and did not reply for a few moments. Then he observed in a doubtful, hesitating way, —

"Yes; but it's no easy job to keep to one's reckoning in such a dirty night. I've been out in this 'ere Channel for now, I may say, the best part of my life, and I'm quite sure I never saw such a blinding snowstorm as this; it puts out all one's calculations; it's hard work even to see the compass. Just give orders to heave the lead, captain."

The first mate at once called all hands up to heave the lead. The result was satisfactory; still the captain knew that so beset with shoals and sandbanks was this dangerous sea that though they were now in deep water, in another ten minutes they might be stuck fast on a sandbank.

With very much reduced canvas the ship was driven on by the gale, which now appeared to have reached its height. The wind which howled round the vessel seemed to be now due north; the seas dashed over her, sweeping the decks, and completely deluging the cabins and berths; some of the men barely escaped being carried overboard, and many lashed themselves to the masts and capstan.

The lead was continually heaved, while the orders of the captain to his mate could scarcely be heard through the roaring of the storm. It was now 2 A. M. — five hours more before there would be a gleam of daylight to cheer those anxious mariners and guide them in their difficult and dangerous course. All hands were kept on deck to be ready

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in case of an emergency. As many of the crew as could crowded into the galley, crouching round the fire till that was at last extinguished by the deluge of surf which poured upon it. The first mate stood at the forecastle head, the captain remained on the poop, while the pilot kept close to the helmsman, to whom, with no little indecision in his tone, he gave his orders. The ship's course was constantly altered, and Martin became more convinced than ever that the pilot was so bewildered as to be completely out of his reckoning.

Thus another hour passed away; then Martin, straining his eyes through the mist and snow, which did not seem to be falling quite so thickly at the moment, though the wind was more furious than ever, thought he discerned a light on the port side towards the N.E. He called the second mate up to him.

"Isn't that a light out there, Robinson?" he said; "and a bright one, too, for us to see it through all this snow."

"No doubt of it, Martin," said the second mate, after fixing his eyes intently in the direction pointed out to him, "and it's on a lightship, too, and not on land, that's certain; for it keeps bobbing up and down — now and then we can't see it at all. Look! it's gone now — there it is again."

"It may be aboard some ship on the same course as ours," remarked Martin.

"No — no, mate, that can't be; no ship carries such a bright light as that. We're near some sandbank, you may be sure, and that's the lightship anchored there."

Martin did not reply, but hurried down to the pilot.

"I say, Mr. Watson," he cried, "do you see that light out there to the eastward? What is it?"

The pilot gazed out to sea — he started as he saw the light.

"Well, what is it, pilot?" said the captain, who had now come up, somewhat sternly. "Surely you know whether it's a lightship or a lighthouse on shore."

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"I know it's not a lighthouse — any fool could see that," replied the pilot, surlily; "and I'm not supposed to know how many craft are to be found in our course, or what sort of lights they carry."

"But you are supposed to know the position of the various lightships on the sands in the Channel," said the captain, severely; and you can see that's a lightship and not a passing vessel as well as I can. I believe it's the light on the Girdler Sand."

"And I believe it to be the Tongue Light," replied the pilot. "In fact, I've no doubt about it."

He was really so muddled and confused that he did not know which light it was; in fact he wasn't quite sure that it was not the Kentish Knock, but he would not confess it, so risked this positive assertion.

So far as the captain and his son were able to judge the light was some two or three miles off. That if they were in the Prince's Channel the Tongue Light could not be seen on their port quarter was certain, the Tongue Sand being between that channel and Margate Roads. It must therefore be to the starboard.

"Unless he's taken us into the Queen's Channel after all, it must be the Girdler or the Prince's Light," said the captain to his son. "Run down, Martin, and have a look at the chart."

The first mate disappeared down the companion at once. The captain continued to argue the point with the pilot; the latter's replies being shorter and surlier than ever.

"It can't be the Tongue Light, that's certain," said Martin, decidedly, as he came up to them; "that is to say, if we're in the Prince's Channel."

"You talk so confidently, young man, you'd better steer the ship yourself," said the pilot, angrily.

"Mr. Watson, will you tell us plainly," said the captain, "whether you know for certain what light that is? if you've got so confused by this snow and fog as to have lost your

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reckoning, it's much better to say so outright, and then we can put our heads together and try and mend matters; but, remember, you're risking the ship and cargo, and our lives, into the bargain, by going on recklessly ahead — and with you is the responsibility."

The pilot did not reply. He seemed to be hesitating whether he should trust to chance and continue on their course, or make a clean breast of it by telling the truth.

He was just about to open his lips when there was a dull, heavy crash, which shook every timber in the "Star of Devon" from stem to stern. Many of the crew were thrown on their faces by the violence of the shock, while immediately after a tremendous sea rolled over the ship, sweeping the decks, and drenching every man to the skin.

The pilot was pale as death. The ship had struck on a sandbank. In such a gale there could be no hope of saving her. Would any of those on board escape with their lives? was the question uppermost in every heart. The vessel groaned and quivered as every fresh wave struck her, driving her higher on to the sand, and fixing her more firmly in it.

The pilot, pale as death, exclaimed in a tone of despair, — "We have struck on either 'the Tongue,' or 'the Girdler.' In such a night we are lost. May God have mercy on us!"

The captain said nothing. Stern grief, calm resignation to submit to the inevitable, was depicted on his rigid features. Martin was silent, too; he looked first at the pilot, then at his father, waiting for a command from one or the other.

But many of the crew did not take matters so calmly. With death staring them in the face — a death which they felt would be due to the carelessness or ignorance of the pilot, for his undecided conduct had been noted and discussed by the men — they rushed up to him with angry gestures and bitter reproaches, loudly accusing him of being

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the cause of this disaster to the ship, and danger to their lives.

The captain turned upon them at once. "My men," he said, "most of you know me well enough, for we've sailed together on many a voyage in fair weather and foul, — for my sake, then, be generous and don't throw all the blame on Mr. Watson — he's in just as great danger as we are; the best pilot may make mistakes sometimes, and in such a snowstorm as this it's no easy matter to keep to the right course. If you want to throw the blame on any one it must be on me, for sailing yesterday with such a gale coming on. Let's all set to work to do what we can first to save the ship, and if that's not possible, to save our lives. With God's help we may succeed; He alone can help us in this trouble."

Rapidly but firmly, and in a voice so clear that it could be heard above the raging of the storm, these words were spoken. The men, who had confidence in the captain, at once felt their good sense and quietly awaited his further orders.

"Send up a couple of rockets at once!" he cried.

The mate hurried off to execute his command.

Then the captain ordered the well to be sounded: the result was the discovery that the water was rising rapidly in the hold. This was bad news indeed, but it was only what was to be expected from their position.

Not five minutes had elapsed after the rockets had been fired when a bright light was seen to the eastward, and a brilliant rocket rose in the air — this was speedily followed by another, and very shortly after two more were seen still farther to the eastward. This proved that their signals of distress were seen by two light-vessels, that brave hearts already knew their danger, and all that human power could effect would be exerted to rescue them.

They repeated the signals — a large tar-barrel was brought on deck and lighted; at first it blazed up brightly

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enough and threw a lurid light over the pale, haggard faces of the crew, who had scarcely been able before to distinguish each other's features, but then a heavy sea rolled over the vessel and put it out immediately. It was only then by burning blue-lights and sending up rockets that they could make their perilous position known to the men in the light-vessels and to those on shore.

How long would it be before aid could reach them? Would it come before the ship was broken up by the violence of the waves, and dashed against the treacherous sands?

The water was rapidly gaining ground in the hold; pumping and bailing were of little avail; as each sea struck her the vessel bumped more heavily on the sand, straining every timber, creaking and groaning from stem to stern.

The pilot had completely lost all heart and self-command. He gave himself up to blank despair. He said that even if his life were saved, of which there did not seem much chance, he was a ruined man. No captain would trust a pilot who had had such ill luck as to lose a vessel on a sand-bank; probably, too, he would lose his certificate. The captain did all he could to cheer him, but to no avail, and little time had he for it, so taken up was he by his efforts to save the ship and in endeavoring to keep order and discipline among the crew. In this he was ably seconded by Martin. Both were so occupied that they scarcely gave a thought to the danger to which they were exposed. All they could do was now and then to breathe a silent prayer to Him Who holdeth the seas in the hollow of His hand, to assuage the storm and spare their lives. They placed some hope in the fact that the tide was rising. A change of wind or a sudden abatement of the storm might enable them to get off the sands, but there seemed little chance of either. The darkness, the mist, and the snow still continued, and very earnestly, like the shipwrecked companions of the apostle St. Paul, did they wish for the day.

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But when at last, after hard toiling at the pumps, there was a faint gleam of light to the eastward, their condition had become desperate indeed. The water had completely gained the mastery in the hold and cabins. It was now quickly rising to the deck. Very soon the men would have to take to the rigging, and they knew what that meant in such a gale and such bitter cold weather — hanging on for dear life during weary hours to the masts and yards till the frozen hands and exhausted frame could stand it no longer, and they dropped off one by one into the cruel deep and perished in the icy waters. Then there were the boats; should they take to them? In such a boiling sea, the huge breakers rolling over the sand and surging round the ship, it would be impossible to lower a boat — it must be swamped immediately or dashed against the side of the vessel. Some of the crew were for risking it. The captain said it would be madness, that it would be throwing away their lives uselessly, for only a lifeboat or large lugger could weather such seas. Nevertheless, under the circumstances, every man must do as he felt best for himself, and he should not oppose the attempt, much as he should regret its being tried. The signals from the lightship had proved to them, he said, that their danger was known. These signals must have been seen by the men on shore who, on such a night as this, would be sure to be on the look-out for ships in distress. That some lifeboat was on the way to them now he felt certain. With the coming light he trusted they would catch a glimpse of the friendly sail, or smoke of the Ramsgate tug. The gale, too, might have blown itself out by the morning, and even if they had to take to the rigging they would not remain there long before they were rescued. The men reluctantly made up their minds not to lower the boats at present; they would wait, they said, till they were really obliged to climb the rigging. A glance at the wild surf around them was almost enough to convince the most daring that no ship's boat could live out such a furious sea.

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CHAPTER XV.

A GALLANT RESCUE.

"Where'er in ambush lurk the fatal sands,
They claim the danger, proud of skilful bands
For while, with darkling course, the vessels sweep
The winding shore, or plough the faithless deep;
Or bar, or shelf, the watery path they sound
With dexterous arm, sagacious of the ground.
Ceaseless they combat every hostile wind,
Wheeling in mazy track with course inclined,
Expert to moor where terrors line the road,
Or raise the anchor from its dark abode."

— FALCONER.

THE majority of Londoners are probably familiar with the town of Margate. It is the seaside playground of Cockney children, the invigorating resort of the weary tradesman and the fagged clerk, who in the hot summer months drink in new life and energy from its bracing air and strengthening breezes. Its sands, its bathing machines, its crowded jetty, its lively streets and animated promenades, form a bright picture in the minds of many unacquainted with spots more favored by Nature — a picture on which they look back with envy from the dingy office and the unsavory slum of the befogged metropolis, longing for the return of the short annual holiday when they may again breathe the fresh air and plunge into the briny waves,

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which constitute some of the principal charms of this Kentish Elysium.

Bright and cheerful, however, as Margate may appear to the London holiday-maker in the summer months, he would find its aspect very different were he to visit it in winter. Keen east winds, gloomy skies, dull, leaden sea, deserted streets, desolate promenades, half-closed shops, are the characteristics of a Margate winter. On the pier and jetty, so thronged in the season with a gay multitude, but a few sailors are now to be seen pacing up and down as if on the deck of a ship, or a coast-guardsman eagerly on the lookout with his telescope. The pleasure-boats, which with their white sails and many-colored flags everywhere stud the glittering summer sea, are now all drawn up in the street as a secure refuge, the port and beach not being safe for such small craft when a sudden gale comes on. Anchored in the harbor, close alongside the pier, may be seen some half-dozen Margate luggers, compact and strongly built craft of from twenty to thirty tons, famous since many a long year for bold enterprise, gallant rescues, desperate struggles in the teeth of furious gales, with all the elements combined against them, to reach some wreck hard and fast on the rocks which fringe the shore, or embedded in some of the many treacherous sandbanks which lie hidden in the neighboring channel, and on which so many a fine ship has come to swift and unexpected ruin. On the pier itself, close to the anchorage of the luggers, stands the lifeboat house, in which are two fine lifeboats, kept ready for use at a moment's notice whenever an emergency should occur.

It is by the luggers that most of the sailors who may be seen loafing about on the pier and jetty and along the waterside at Margate, Ramsgate, and Broadstairs, gain a livelihood in winter. It is an uncertain and precarious one. If the weather is fine, smooth, and clear, there is nothing to be done. When a thick fog comes across from

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the Dutch coast, or when a fierce gale arises from any quarter of the compass, the crews of these luggers — hovellers they are called — become at once on the alert. But it is not the custom of the more enterprising of these men to remain in port till their services are required. They often go out on speculation in fine weather, expecting a change; they cruise round the various shoals and sand-banks on the look-out for vessels in distress. Night after night they remain on the cold stormy deep; frequently they are absent a whole week, and come back without having got a job of any kind. If a strong gale blows from the south-west, Margate Roads are sheltered; vessels from the Downs resort hither for a safe anchorage, while those going down Channel, fearing to pass the Foreland and encounter the gale, also anchor here till the weather moderates. Then is a lively time for Margate luggers, who have to supply many a ship with an anchor or cable, on which the crew make a good profit. Sometimes, after the wind has been blowing a strong gale from the south-west, it will suddenly veer round to the north or north-east with increasing violence; all the various craft which have sought shelter in Margate Roads will be now exposed to its full fury, and be in more or less danger till they have weighed their anchors and got round the Foreland; no lugger will now be seen moored to Margate Pier; the services of every one will be required, and a good harvest will those weather-beaten seamen have reaped before they enter the port again.

The lugger is often the property of the men — from eight to twelve — who man her. Their only pay is what they make by rendering services to vessels, or by salvage. In the latter case, when, for instance, they succeed in getting a valuable ship and cargo off the rocks or sands, the profits are sometimes considerable; these are divided among the men, but the boat takes a certain number of shares which go to her owners. It is a fact, — sad but

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true, — that there is no reward for saving life; the men are entitled to nothing for that; it is left entirely to the generosity of the rescued. There have been instances in which emigrant ships have been wrecked and hundreds of persons saved and brought to shore by these brave fellows, and they have received nothing, except for the cargo they have landed. All the more to their credit is it, therefore, that they are as eager — as ready to risk their lives to save those of their fellow-men when they know they will gain nothing by it, as they are when a heavy salvage is in prospect. These men, then, are an honor to the towns where they dwell; some few of them may be what is called unsteady, — given to take a glass too much occasionally, rough in their manners, and exorbitant in their demands, and not too select in the language they use — but for the most part these boatmen are courageous, undaunted, careless of their lives, completely forgetting themselves when they know others to be in danger. They are the heroes of the rock and of the sandbank, and can relate many a tale of gallant exploits, hairbreadth escapes, and fierce battles with the storm, which must rivet the attention and excite the interest of the most indifferent.

A dull, chilly November day, with a falling barometer, had been followed by a thick night and a rising gale, accompanied by snow and sleet. Early in the evening the hovellers of Margate were already on the alert. From all parts of the town, men enveloped in oilskins, and wearing sou'-westers, closely tied down, might be seen, by the light of the flickering gas-lamps, hurrying towards the harbor. Sailors paced the pier and jetty, every now and then standing still, while they strained their eyes through the snow and mist to watch for the lights of passing vessels, and listened intently for any signal of distress. Three of the luggers had put to sea. This was just the sort of night when a good haul might be made, and as business had been terribly slack of late, so fine a chance must not be

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lost. Everything was prepared also to launch the lifeboats in case of need. Through the weary hours of the night the men of their crews took it by turns to be on the watch, and ready to summon their mates if occasion required. Most of them gathered for shelter under the lee of the Droit-House, from which they every now and then emerged to take a few strides on the jetty, and look out for signals.

The clocks of the town had just struck two. It was darker than ever; the wind howled round the pier and jetty, whirling the thick snow into drifts, and beating it into the faces of the men as they stood on the look-out. With the rising tide the sea rolled in heavier than ever, huge waves in rapid succession dashed against the iron piles of the jetty, which quivered beneath the shock, while volumes of surf fell in clouds over the Droit-House, and then poured in streams along the adjacent Parade, flooding the basements of the surrounding houses.

Two men, who seemed more keenly on the look-out than the rest, were standing at a point some little way along the jetty, where they could get a wider range of view, though it was exposed to the full fury of the gale.

"What a dirty night it is, George," said one of them. "In such a thick snowstorm as this it'll be hard work to see any signal, should there be one."

"Or to hear a gun either, Bill, in this gale," replied the other.

"Our mates in the luggers are sure to get a good job to-night, George."

"Yes — it will be hardly earned enough," replied his companion; "and if we haven't to put out before daybreak I shall be surprised."

"So shall I, George. With such a lot of craft about as there must be just now it'll be a strange thing if none of 'em get into trouble of some sort, and want our help."

"They may be in trouble enough without our knowing of it, Bill," said the other.

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There was a momentary lull in the storm as he said these words.

"What's that?" he exclaimed, as he listened intently, and peered eagerly through the darkness.

"I saw nothing, George," said his mate.

"Neither did I; but I heard something very like a gun."

"Ah! now, there's a flash, if my eyes don't deceive me, George? did you see it?"

"No, Bill, I can't say I did; but there's the sound again, I heard it plainer than ever; it's from the Tongue lightship, if I ain't very much mistaken."

At that moment a majestic wave rolling in with fury dashed against the jetty and enveloped them in spray. They hurried back to the Droit-House to inquire of their mates if they had observed the signals. None of them had, but this report roused the men to a still keener watch; a very few minutes after a coast-guardsman came running down from the fort, and, almost breathless, called out to the men —

"There are signals from the Tongue lightship — I have heard one gun distinctly and seen two flashes. There's a wreck somewhere, for certain."

"Launch the lifeboat, then — all hands to the work," cried one of the men, who seemed to be in command. He was, in fact, the coxswain of one of the boats.

All hurried off to lend a hand; there was quite a crowd round the lifeboat house. Placed on its truck, it was in a very few moments conveyed to the slip way in the inner harbor and as speedily afloat and manned. It was decided that the other lifeboat should not be launched immediately. They would wait and see how it fared with the first; moreover, when day dawned it might be found that her services would be required elsewhere. There might be vessels ashore on some of the neighboring rocks.

It was a terrible sea to venture in. It looked as if not even a lifeboat could weather such a storm. But the risk

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and peril were not for a moment taken into account by those brave fellows; a ship was in distress, precious lives were in danger, — of that there was no doubt — it was their duty, therefore, at all hazards to try and save them.

In the teeth of a north-easterly gale such as was now blowing it is no safe or easy matter for a lifeboat to get out of Margate harbor and make headway against it. Those on shore who crowded to the pierhead to watch their mates, as they waged their fierce battle with the furious elements combined against them, felt that there was no little danger in the heroic exploit; sometimes they held their breath in dread as the gallant boat, completely submerged by the waves, disappeared from sight, only relieved when she rose again from the boiling surges, to be tossed on the crest of some huge billow like a plaything, and then again to be completely buried in the wild waters.

With the greatest skill on the part of the coxswain, and by the exertion of every muscle on the part of each of the crew, the lifeboat succeeded in making her way through this terrific sea, dodging the waves cunningly, and keeping her head well to the wind. The men, though lashed to the thwarts, had still some difficulty in keeping their places.

The mist and snowstorm in a very few moments hid the lifeboat from the group on the pier; they could no longer watch her progress, but only wish her God-speed on her blessed errand, and a safe return to their brave mates who manned her.

From Margate to the Tongue light-ship is a distance of nine miles. In such a sea and with so furious a gale blowing against her it must be a long time indeed before the lifeboat reached the Tongue sand: neither did it follow from the signal that the vessel in distress was on that sand at all. She might be on one of the many others which lie thick in that part of the Channel, for when one light-ship gives a signal the others repeat it. All in the pitchy dark-

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ness, amid the wild tumult of the raging surf, the brave lifeboat ploughed her way. It is a stern and desperate wrestle between dauntless men and furious elements, seemingly combined in close alliance to defeat their noble efforts. But they toil on. Drenched, almost smothered, and breathless through their exertions, as well as from the waters which dash upon them, they still hold on to the mast or gunwale when some more powerful wave seems as if it would tear them out of their places. The splendid boat, after every assault, in which now and then she seems to be vanquished and utterly to have disappeared beneath the surf, always rights herself at last and emerges safely on the crest of the next wave. When they have got far enough out to avoid the breakers close to the shore they are able to hoist a closely-reefed sail, which carries them on swiftly and gives the well-nigh exhausted men a little rest to recruit their strength for the fresh exertions in store for them.

Meanwhile let us return to the "Star of Devon," which we left stuck fast upon the fatal sands.

The position of those on board was becoming increasingly desperate every minute. With each wave the vessel thumped more heavily on the sand, the strongest timbers could not bear for long so terrible a strain—in time she must break up. Would she be able to hold out till deliverance came? was the solemn question which each man asked himself. She was, too, rapidly filling with water. The moment was close at hand when they must take to the rigging. Now five of the men, driven to despair, dreading the risk of clinging in such a tremendous gale and in such piercing cold for an unknown length of time to masts and spars, determined, against the advice of both captain and pilot, on the still greater risk of taking to the boat. The cutter, with immense difficulty, was lowered into the boiling surge which raged round the ship. There was just then a momentary lull, which seemed to inspire the

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poor fellows with a ray of hope. The captain knew it was delusive, and did all in his power to dissuade them from the mad attempt. No sooner did the boat touch the sea than the five men jumped on board her, and seizing the oars, rowed with the energy inspired by the certainty that it was their last chance of life to get away from the huge breakers which rolled against the sand. On they sped, and at first their mates on board hoped that after all they might be saved. It was a vain hope. The lull was followed by an increase of the tempest. The roar of wind and waves was heard as the latter rolled in with redoubled fury. In the faint twilight the men on board strained their eyes through the mist and spray, but not a trace of the boat was to be seen. It, together with its unhappy crew, had perished in the merciless waters. A cry of horror went up from the "Star of Devon," but they were powerless to help. They could only breathe a prayer that God would have mercy on the souls of their poor mates, so suddenly cut off almost before their eyes.

The captain had scarce dared to hope that the boat could avoid being swamped in such a surf as was rolling over the sands. What would be the fate of themselves on board a vessel which might break up at any moment he could only leave to Him who alone ruleth the raging of the sea.

Working at the pumps had been abandoned as a useless labor; for in their present position the water gained too rapidly to be resisted by their feeble efforts. It had already risen to the decks; the men were wading in it up to their ankles. The fire in the galley had very soon been extinguished, no food could be cooked or water boiled; the pangs of hunger were now added to their terrible sufferings from cold and exposure.

The wretched crew, reduced to fifteen men, all crowded into the forecastle head. Here the grim day dawned upon them disclosing a wild expanse of angry sea, with a furious

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surf breaking against the sand upon which they were fixed, wave after wave sweeping the decks and deluging them with spray. A dark and leaden sky gave no hope of a change in the weather, while the fierce north-easter howled drearily and whistled piteously through the remnant of their broken spars and torn cordage.

With the brave endurance and cool resignation so characteristic of their race, as well as of the calling to which they belonged, the men bore their suffering and their danger without a murmur. Death indeed stared them in the face, and seemed to be drawing nearer to them every moment. Few words were spoken; every eye was straining through mist and snow in the direction whence help was expected. The signals which were still fired from the lightships proved to them that they were not forgotten, and that efforts were in all probability already being made to save them.

But with the rising tide the water gained upon them — even as they stood at the forecastle head they were up to their knees in it; each wave which dashed over the devoted ship buried them in foam, and nearly tore them from their hold by the gunwale. They all perceived that the dreaded time had come when they must take to the rigging as the only place of comparative safety.

The mizzenmast was gone, the mainmast was still standing, but shook and tottered ominously as the waves broke against it; the foremast as yet stood firm enough, and with its yards and rigging provided space enough for all the men to take refuge on. Slowly, therefore, they now began to climb the rigging, with hands so benumbed that they could scarcely grasp the ropes; some clung round the mast, others to the yards; they huddled together as closely as possible for the sake of warmth: up here it was far colder than on the deck, for they were more exposed to the bitter wind, which seemed to freeze them to the very bones, while the snow, which had ceased for some time, had now

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recommenced, and cut their faces like sharp needles. The captain and his son were close to each other, lashed to the mast; just below them on the yard were the second mate, the pilot, and some six of the crew, — the rest were lower down, either on the mast or clinging to the spars and rigging, a few remaining on the end of the jib-boom, which was still out of water. Thus they awaited their fate with heroic patience and fortitude.

"What do you think of it, father?" said Martin to the captain.

"I don't know what to think, Martin," he replied, gravely; "I've lost my good ship, that's certain, and not through any fault of my own, and as to our lives being saved, all depends on whether the lifeboat from the shore reaches us before we break up; then it'll be no easy work getting at us, too, with all this surf boiling around these sands."

"I can't get those poor fellows in the cutter out of my head, father," replied Martin, after a pause; "would they had taken your advice and stayed on board!"

"Yes, Martin, their fate weighs heavily on my heart, but we could have done nothing to help them; God knows, I did all in my power to stop them."

"Yes, father, and perhaps after all they've only perished a few hours before us; every time I feel the mast quiver I think our last hour has come," said Martin, sadly.

"She's a well-built craft, Martin, she's weathered many a storm, and the mast is firm and strong, but the strongest couldn't stand for long against such seas as these. While we hope for the best and don't cease praying the Almighty to save us, we must be prepared for the worst, ready to face death and pass into eternity."

"We must, indeed, father; it's what I've been thinking all along."

"Well, for my part," said the captain, "if it's God's will to take me, I am ready to submit to it. I'd have liked to

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live longer to have made several more voyages, to see you a captain, Martin, married and settled, and all that, but if it isn't to be, it's because God knows it's best it shouldn't be, and if I perish in this awful sea, I trust He'll take me to a happier place above, where your mother and your brother and sisters are, Martin. I've no good deeds to boast of, though I've always tried to do my duty, God helping me, and it is only through the merits of my Saviour that I can hope for salvation."

"I try to submit, too, father," said Martin, with a heavy sigh; "and to feel that whatever happens is for the best. Oh! but it is hard indeed to die so young, just when all looks bright and prosperous, and I'm getting on so well in my calling. Poor Kate! may God comfort her! I know she'll feel my death terribly."

"Ay, she will, Martin, there's no doubt, and my poor old mother, too," replied the captain.

They were silent for a few moments; both were too overcome to speak; nothing was heard but the howling of the wind and the roar of the waves as they rolled over the sand.

Father and son were both engaged in fervent prayer to the omnipotent Ruler of the storm, beseeching Him to save them and all those still remaining on the ship; but if such were not His gracious will to give them a spirit of resignation and submission, to pour the peace of the Blessed Spirit into their hearts, that they might, trusting in the merits of their Redeemer, meet the last enemy without fear; and above all they implored Him to bless their loved ones at home, to comfort and sustain them should they be called on to suffer the heavy affliction which seemed in store for them.

Martin was the first to speak.

"If they had this storm at Plymouth yesterday afternoon, father, I daresay they remembered us at evening service. Mr. Newberry never forgets his sailor friends when it

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blows a gale at service time. He always gives out the hymn —

> 'Eternal Father, strong to save,
> Whose arm hath bound the restless wave;
> Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
> Its own appointed limits keep;
> Oh hear us when we cry to Thee
> For those in peril on the sea:'

and then the people sing it on their knees."

"Yes, Martin, I remember," replied the captain. "I've heard them sing it once or twice when I've been ashore on Sundays when it's been blowing hard — and you used to repeat that hymn to me when you were quite a little chap; you learned it at the Sunday-school."

"Yes, father, and many others, too; and I often feel thankful I have learned so many; they come up into my mind at all sorts of times, and help to cheer me when I'm on watch of a night, or when I'm out of spirits or like to fall into sin," said Martin.

"As texts out of the Bible do to me very often, Martin," replied his father. "I remember them when they're most wanted. They've often comforted me when I've been most downhearted and well nigh in despair. Just now I was repeating the words of that psalm — 'Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O Lord; Lord, hear my voice.' . . . . 'I wait for the Lord, my soul doth wait, and in His word do I hope. My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning.' That's very suitable to us just now, isn't it?"

"Yes, indeed, father, and the rest of the psalm is, too."

"Well, we are waiting for Him, sure enough," said the captain, "for He alone can send us help. We must trust in His word, for He hath said somewhere else — 'Call upon Me in the time of trouble, and I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify Me."

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"But if we are not saved, father — if no lifeboat comes out to us, and we all perish" ——

"Then, Martin, we shall learn what we can't see or understand now, — that God's ways are always right, and that He will do what's best for us and ours, though it mayn't seem so to you and me at the time."

Martin sighed. He was thinking of Kate and the happy, prosperous career which had been dawning so brightly before him. He felt how hard it was to submit patiently to the fate which threatened him. He was trying to resign himself into the care of his heavenly Father, Who hitherto had so graciously guided and guarded him — to trust himself entirely to Him, leaving his future in His hands.

A life of many trials and much affliction passed in frequent hardships and stern devotion to duty had taught the father that lesson which the son was now earnestly endeavoring to learn.

It was now daylight, but the murky sky and the snow which came on with every squall prevented the shipwrecked crew from seeing any distance ahead of them.

The tide was falling, which was so far in their favor that the waves did not reach such a height as before; but if there was any decrease in their force the weakened ship was not the less shaken by the recurring blows. As each breaker made her timbers quiver, the men thought surely that the fatal moment had come, and that the next would plunge them into the boiling surf. But hours passed away and the good ship still stood firm; benumbed and famished, the crew clung on to the masts and rigging, some buoyed up by the hope that deliverance must now be near, others in utter despondency felt that soon they could hold on no longer, and must drop down from sheer exhaustion into the raging deep below.

Suddenly Martin, whose eyesight was specially keen, and

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who had been for some minutes gazing intently to the southward, called to the captain —

"Father, look out there on our starboard quarter — don't you see a speck on the horizon — isn't that a boat of some kind?"

The captain did not reply for some minutes; then he said, cheerfully, "Yes, Martin, it is, there's no doubt, but what sort of a craft is another question — God grant it may be coming to our assistance. It's a comfort to feel that those on shore know there is a ship in distress, and will help us if they can."

Martin, as well as he could make himself heard through the roar of the sea, and the howling of the wind, inquired of the men on the mast and rigging below if they saw the boat. Not one of them had as yet, but when their attention was drawn to it they immediately made it out. Courage revived at once, the most despondent took heart again. Hope, which "springs eternal in the human breast," seemed to give fresh strength to the weakest among them.

Now and then the speck, which they were all so eagerly watching, completely disappeared — then a cold shudder would pass through many of the men — was the boat swamped? or had they been victims of some cruel delusion all along, and was it no boat at all? But before these gloomy feelings could gain the mastery over them the boat was seen again, larger and distincter than before. In less than an hour's time after Martin had first discerned it the shivering sailors clinging to the mast and yards of the ill-fated "Star of Devon" could see that the craft was none other than a lifeboat, coming as quickly as she could in the teeth of such a gale, to save their lives. The hearts of the captain and first mate swelled with deep thankfulness to the gracious God Who had heard their cry in their trouble, and was about to deliver them out of their distress. Martin, with the sanguine enthusiasm of youth, seemed to think that all danger was over, and to forget the peril in which

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they still were, and the risk to which every man would be exposed in getting from the wreck to the lifeboat, should the gallant crew of the latter succeed in reaching them.

"I am grateful, indeed, Martin," said his father, "for those good people's help; God grant they may succeed in rescuing us, but don't make too sure yet; any moment the ship may break up long before the lifeboat reaches us — and when it does come, we mayn't all get on board in safety. I have heard of a whole crew being lost when a lifeboat's been close to them; it'll be no easy job to save us in this sea, I can tell you."

"You're right, father, but after one has well nigh given up all for lost, and there comes all at once a chance for deliverance, one's apt to look too much on the bright side."

"Yes, quite natural, and especially for young blood, Martin," said the captain.

Now to the northward they saw two luggers a long way off, plainly on the other side of the sand, the sky having somewhat cleared in that direction. These were probably also on the look-out for the ship in distress, whose signals had been heard, seen, and repeated by the lightship. This helped still more to raise their spirits.

Resolutely ploughing its way through the mighty waves the gallant lifeboat was slowly but surely nearing the fatal sands.

"I see the ship right on the end of the Girdler," cried the coxswain who, when the boat had been lifted on the crest of a huge billow, had stood up to get a good view all around; "there she is, hard and fast, and the sea beating over her; if her crew are alive they must be in the rigging, for her decks are clean swept every minute."

"Ay, ay, Bill, I see her now," said a man at the bows, and then down went the lifeboat in the trough of the sea between two great waves, and nothing more of the ship could be seen till they were again carried up on another lofty crest.

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"It'll be a desperate job, won't, it, my lads?" cried the coxswain.

"Sure enough it will, Bill," said one of the crew; "but we'll do it, though; perhaps it won't be worse than what we've done before."

"And how glad those poor chaps'll be to see us coming," remarked another man. "They must have suffered terribly in such a night as we have had."

"Well, if they're still alive, and it's possible to save them, we'll do it yet," said the coxswain, "the Almighty helping us."

Then they rowed on in silence. How, they thought, would they avoid being swamped by the waves breaking on the sands? How could they reach the men on board the wreck and get them into the lifeboat? Some thought of the risks they were themselves running — not with fear or regret, because they were doing their duty, and no more shrank before the struggle in which they had to engage with the winds and waves than the brave soldier would who storms a fortress in the face of the enemy's fire — but the picture of widowed wives and fatherless children cannot fail to affect the boldest men when brought in close proximity to death. They were now so near the sands that they plainly perceived the men on the mast and rigging. That they were still alive, and that they had not arrived too late to rescue them, filled the hearts of the gallant boatmen with joy.

But the poor fellows in the "Star of Devon"! how their hearts swelled with hope when they saw the lifeboat so near them, and could not only distinguish the crew who manned her, but see their friendly signs as well! They raised a faint cheer, which was responded to by a much louder one from the lifeboat, and fell as sweetest music on their ears, through the raging of the storm.

"Hark! Martin," said the captain; "they are cheering us from the lifeboat."

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"Yes, father, thank God they have all but reached us at last; what a desperate struggle they must have had to get here."

"They must indeed, Martin; but their real work hasn't begun yet, and though I'm full of hope that by God's help they'll succeed, we mustn't make too sure that they'll be able to save us all."

"I pray God they may, father," said Martin, cheerfully; "we know He has heard us, and sent the lifeboat, and surely, then, He will answer the rest of our prayer and save our lives."

"It'll be all for the best, Martin, however it may turn out. Since I've been clinging to the mast here I've made up my mind to that, and I thank God that He has given us this time to think over our past lives, to pray for pardon for our many sins, and for strength and resignation to meet what may be in store for us," said the captain, solemnly.

"O father, you speak very gloomily," said Martin; "why should we think that after all we shall be lost?"

"I didn't say I thought that, Martin; only when we're face to face with dangers such as these we ought to be prepared for the worst. With this tempest raging around me I can truly say that I have felt the truth of those blessed words: 'Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee.' Think of them, Martin, if I am taken from you—that might happen, you know," he continued after a pause, "you might be saved and I drowned."

"Oh! don't say that, father; and why shouldn't it be the other way—I drowned and you rescued?"

"Yes, true enough, it might be so, Martin; we should both, therefore, be ready if God calls us away. Still, let's hope for the best and do all we can to save our own lives, so that our brave deliverers won't have to go back disappointed."

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"If you get back safe to Plymouth, father, and I don't, do all you can to cheer up Kate, and tell her how I thought about her to the last," said Martin, sadly.

"That I will, Martin; and if I should be taken, remember my poor old mother'll have no one to depend on but you."

"I promise you grandmother shall never want for anything as long as I live to work for her."

"Ay, I trust you, Martin; I know you'll keep your word — a good son you've been to me, indeed, one I may well be proud of, thank God."

"I've given you trouble and anxiety enough, though, father; don't you remember Lisbon?"

"Well, I had almost forgotten that, Martin; you were young and inexperienced then — you profited afterwards by the bitter lesson you learned that day."

"I shall never forget the suffering I caused you then, father," said Martin; "nor that if it hadn't been for you I should have been drowned that night; you saved my life then as you did afterwards when I had the fight with the shark."

"Look, sir," called the second mate, who was lashed to the rigging just below them, to the captain, "the men in the lifeboat are making signs to us."

"They mean you're to get your ropes ready," said the pilot, who had heard the remark.

"That's no easy matter," said the second mate; "we're helpless up here to give a hand to the ropes."

"We shall know when they get nearer what they mean," said the captain.

The tide, which was rapidly falling, was greatly in favor of the shipwrecked men. The vessel, by the repeated shocks of the waves, had been driven high up on the sands; now, though she groaned and quivered as much as ever at each blow, the furious breakers barely reached the forecastle head, though the whole ship was at every onslaught envel-

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oped in foam. Very soon they perceived that if the ship still held together they would be able to return to the deck, and there prepare for the coming lifeboat. At the same time there was no decrease in the force of the gale, — the wind howled round them as fiercely as ever, — and they foresaw what a desperate battle the lifeboat must wage with the tremendous surf in order to get near enough to be of any avail; on their part, too, caution, skill, and all the little strength remaining to them would be necessary to second the efforts of their gallant deliverers.

Some of the men already begin to unlash themselves from the rigging, and slowly and cautiously to descend to the deck. But their position here is still perilous from the force of the waves which still sweep over the vessel. They lash themselves therefore to the gunwale. The lifeboat is now within speaking distance. The coxswain halloos out to the shipwrecked crew, "Get a rope ready." "All right," replies the captain, and now he and Martin climb down the mast and reach the forecastle. With the greatest difficulty, and at the risk of being any moment swept overboard by the waves which they watch and skilfully dodge, they get a line ready to throw to the lifeboat as soon as she approaches them near enough. Martin and one of the strongest men of the crew were lashed side by side to the gunwale, the rope in their hands. It is an exciting moment, — the crisis of their fate has come at last. Borne on the crest of a gigantic wave the lifeboat nears the wreck, — then down she goes in the trough of the sea, so buried in surf that for a moment the eager men on board the 'Star of Devon" hold their breath in horror, and fear she is swamped, but she rights herself in a minute, and now is so close that her coxswain roars out in tones which fall distinctly on their ears above the raging tempest, "Now, lads, be ready with your line."

Martin flings the rope with all his strength, when a sudden jerk of the lifeboat causes the men to miss it; the next

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wave carries her some way off from them again, but straining every nerve and muscle, her crew soon bring her again within reach of the wreck.

"It's your turn to fling the rope now, Jack," said Martin to his companion; "I hope you'll have better luck than me."

The man hurled the rope with all his might, and this time the crew of the lifeboat succeeded in grasping it. One rope is not enough to bear the tremendous strain. Martin throws a second, and that, too, is caught by their deliverers, who call out to them to hold it very slack, a needful warning, as a moment after a huge wave bears the lifeboat again far away from the ship; had the rope been taut it would inevitably have snapped it in sunder.

"Now, my lads," said the captain, cheerfully, "be ready to leap into the lifeboat if she gets near enough to us; don't get flurried, or in each other's way, — the men first, the officers afterwards. You've all of you stood out this gale nobly, and I thank you for the assistance you've given me, and the patience you've shown. God bless you all and bring you safe back to your families!"

"And you, too, sir, we hope," cried some of the men; "we mustn't leave our brave captain behind."

"No! no! indeed," shouted the others, "you must jump into the boat first, sir, and we'll follow."

A smile passed over the captain's face as he replied, —

"My good fellows, who ever heard of a captain being in such a hurry to abandon his ship as to be the first to leave it? — no, no, a captain, if he's good for anything, always bides till the last."

"And the first mate by his side," said Martin.

The discussion was stopped by shouts from the lifeboat men. "Look out! Be ready! we hope to get some of you this time."

"All right, we're ready!" cry the crew on the wreck.

The lifeboat, which an instant before they had seen

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some distance off, on the crest of a monster wave, was now being borne swiftly towards them. This time surely some would be able to jump on board her. They unlashed themselves from the gunwale, to which they were clinging; eager, trembling with excitement between hope and fear, they awaited the approach of the delivering boat.

"Don't jump till we tell you," roars through the howling gale the coxswain, "but be ready, all of you."

The boat came nearer and nearer. "Now! now!" cries the coxswain, "jump, jump, for your lives." It is a wide leap, and a desperate one — for if they miss the boat, how small is the chance of rescue from that wild, swirling sea.

Three men take the plunge — all gain the lifeboat in safety; but those on board the wreck having forgotten in their excitement to slacken the lines, they were snapped by the strain put upon them, and their deliverers were driven over the wild seas, a long distance from the ill-fated vessel.

Now all the labor and difficulty of throwing the ropes must be repeated. But the terrified and exhausted crew heard the cheery voices of their intrepid rescuers calling out through the fierce tumult of the storm — "Keep up your courage, lads, don't despair, we'll be up to you again directly — get some more ropes ready."

"They're coming again, Jack," said Martin, "let's be ready with our ropes."

"All right, sir," said his companion, as he held in his right hand another rope, prepared to throw it when the boat came near enough. "But how the old ship shakes and groans! though the tide has fallen a good bit already, and the waves ain't so strong, she trembles as if she would go to pieces any moment. If we don't look sharp we shall be lost after all."

"God grant there yet may be time to save us all," replied Martin, anxiously. "You're quite right about the

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ship, Jack, she quivers as if she were on the point of breaking up."

The captain, on whose face the deepest anxiety might be read, came up behind Martin at this moment. "For God's sake, be careful how you throw the rope this time; a miss may be fatal to us — our lives depend on success. I expect from the creaking of her timbers that she may break up in an instant."

"Look out for your ropes!" cried the coxswain of the lifeboat. "We'll throw two to you as well, this time, to make doubly sure."

"All right," cried the captain. He and the second mate stood ready to catch the grappling lines from the lifeboat. It was a moment of intense excitement and agonizing suspense to the unhappy crew.

They saw the lifeboat coming on with a rush, driven by such a heavy sea that her crew were obliged to use every effort to prevent her being dashed against the wreck. Martin threw his rope at the right moment; it was caught by one of the lifeboat men. Jack's rope missed; but the lines flung on board from the lifeboat were both caught by the captain and second mate. Now the boat is close alongside.

"Jump, my lads, jump!" cries the coxswain.

Nerved by the energy of despair, six men this time gain the boat. Then wave after wave, in rapid succession, once more bears away that ark of safety from the wretched crew, trembling on the brink of a watery grave. Martin, calm, and self-possessed, but pale as death, quietly pays out the rope. Not a word is spoken. All eyes are fixed on the receding lifeboat. They see how their valiant deliverers are wrestling with the surf, and the stern determination on their faces not to be vanquished in their noble efforts; deluged by volumes of water, almost torn from the thwarts by the strength of the waves, they still hold firmly to their places. Such undaunted pluck, such dogged per-

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severance gives fresh courage to the "Star of Devon's" crew.

The ropes quickly paid out hold firm. Now there is a lull again, and the lifeboat, pulled with the desperate strength of the combined exertion, to the utmost, of every muscle of each man on board her, ploughs through the wild turmoil of the breakers up to the wreck once more. The men are crouching on the gunwale ready to spring when the word is given by the coxswain.

"Jump, my men," he cries; "look sharp — as many of you as can this time; it's hard and slow work getting up to you. . . . Now, then, captain, come along!" he shouts, beckoning to the captain, whom he plainly distinguishes among the crew.

"All right, my brave fellows," he replied, "when my turn comes. I will see 'em all safe in your boat first."

Now they jump in, springing simultaneously from all along the ship's gunwale into the boat, heartily welcomed by their already rescued mates as by the lifeboat's crew. It is the work of but a few seconds, so eager were the men to throw themselves off the doomed ship, and all now are in the lifeboat with the exception of the captain, the first mate, and Jack Adams, the sailor who had been employed till the last moment in attending to the ropes which bound the lifeboat to the wreck.

"Now, Jack," said Martin, "let go your line and jump in — I'll hold on by mine till you're safe in."

The words were scarcely out of his mouth when a gigantic wave came rushing down upon them swiftly and with overwhelming force; the ropes are snapped like tow, and the lifeboat is again lifted on the crest of the mighty billow and borne away from the ship, having on board her three precious lives which must yet be saved, however great the difficulty or peril.

A cry of dismay and horror rose from the rescued men in the lifeboat when they saw the brave three still standing

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by the gunwale of the doomed ship. It was owing to *their* calmness, skill, and courage that so many had been saved; they almost forgot their thankfulness for their own preservation when they perceived the danger to which the heroic captain and his two companions were exposed.

"For God's sake save our captain!" they cried imploringly to their gallant deliverers.

"We'll do our best," replied the boatmen, with stern determination on their faces.

With the lifeboat so full as she now was it was harder work than ever to manage her, while the parting of the ropes increased the difficulty of getting alongside the wreck. The gale, too, seemed within the last few minutes to have gathered fresh strength. Beaten about in the surf and breakers, in the great and desperate struggle to reach the wreck once more, the lifeboat is now and then so filled with water, which pours in volumes over the men, that the rescued crew begin to fear that they as well as their intrepid deliverers will after all find a watery grave round these fatal sands. But they did not know the qualities of the splendid lifeboat: she always righted herself again, and once more is approaching the wreck. The ropes were ready to be hurled. Pale, speechless, motionless, stand the three men.

"We mean to save you, all three," shouts the coxswain. "Keep up your spirits, and be careful how you throw the line," while a cheer rises from the rescued crew on board the lifeboat, but before that cheer has finished it changes into a groan of despair and horror.

The lifeboat was almost alongside the "Star of Devon," two of her men were standing on the thwarts ready to catch the ropes, when a tremendous sea, rolling in with fatal force, struck the quivering, battered wreck with irresistible violence. Her timbers parted at once, and in an instant, before the eyes of their terrified mates, the three brave men disappeared from their post on the gunwale, and with the

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broken, shattered remnants of their ship were plunged into the seething mass of wild surf which boiled round the fringe of the sand-bank.

The captain saw the wave coming: he felt certain of the result; he said to his son,—

"It's all over with us, Martin. May the Lord have mercy on our souls! Thank God that so many are safe!"

He had not finished the words when the ship went to pieces. Separated from each other, the heroic three sank in the cold waters. Jack had just time and presence of mind enough to fasten the rope, which he held in his hand and which the lifeboat men had already caught, round his waist. This was the last act perceived by the rescuers. Jack was a strong fellow, and a good swimmer. After a great struggle he rose to the surface, happily for him not far off from the boat; with the help of the rope he was dragged on board her—he was saved; utterly exhausted he sank down in the bottom of the boat. Martin felt the cold waters close upon him. But hope did not abandon him. Even then he would sell his life dearly, and as long as a breath remained in his body he would wrestle for it with the merciless waves. "All Thy waves and Thy billows have gone over me" were the words which rose to his mind as he sank in the raging surf, but then other words were quickly present in his thoughts: "The waves of the sea are mighty, and rage horribly, but yet the Lord who dwelleth on high is mightier," words which he had often sung in church at home, and now encouraged him in his hour of need. It was not the first time he had faced the last enemy. Many thoughts flashed like lightning through his mind—his sins: was he prepared to meet his God? Then his Saviour, who had suffered and borne his sins for him on the cross, was present before him—he would trust Him and not be afraid. He committed himself into His gracious and merciful care. "He shall send down from on high to fetch me, and shall take me out of many waters";

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he prayed that those words might be fulfilled in his case. But his father — an agonizing thought — where was he? Would he be picked up by the lifeboat? Oh! if he could only help him, he felt he would gladly give his life for him. Kate, too, would he ever see her again? Yes; it was hard to die, indeed, life hitherto had shone so brightly before him. But God's will be done!

With such thoughts as these in his heart he rose to the surface, battling wildly with the waves. Floating spars and timbers are the only traces of the wreck, but, ah! there is the lifeboat, not far off, a conspicuous object borne on the top of a wave which is rushing onward to bury him in its cold embrace; he lifts up his arm and tries to shout, but signals are needless, for the men see him plainly enough, and all efforts are now concentrated on saving him. As the wave rolls on he makes a desperate attempt to spring forward on its crest; he nearly succeeds; then is carried backward, rolled over, and buried in surf. Exhausted somewhat, but undaunted, he rises again; he is nearer still to the boat, whose men raise a cheer of encouragement when they perceive him; one of them seizes a life-buoy and hurls it at him; he had all but grasped it when a wave tears him back, and he begins to lose heart and fear that all is over. But he nerves himself for another struggle; this he feels will be the last; such battling with the furious surf, contending against such terrible odds, is enough to exhaust the strongest man in a very short time. With the words in his heart, "Out of the depths have I cried unto Thee, O God; O Lord, hear my prayer," he commends himself to his heavenly Father's care, with humble submission to His will.

As he rises on the crest of a wave he sees the life-buoy not far from him. He strikes out boldly towards it, breasting a huge billow which seems bent on frustrating his purpose; nevertheless, it brings the buoy nearer to him. He makes a plunge forward; he has grasped it, and clings to it

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for dear life's sake. A shout of joy from the boat falls upon his ear; her crew now pull in the rope by which the life-buoy is attached. Just as Martin has thus been drawn close up to the lifeboat, and the men are already stretching out their hands to grasp him and haul him in, a heavy sea strikes the boat and throws her against the buoy, Martin's head receiving a violent blow against her side. Stunned and unconscious he would have let go his hold on the saving buoy and inevitably have perished, had not the brave boatmen, who saw what would happen, immediately seized him, and with no little difficulty as well as risk to themselves, dragged him into the boat.

Pale and motionless they laid him down at the bottom of the boat. Some of the men thought he was dead. Jack Adams, anxiously bending over him, said with a sigh, —

"He's gone, poor young chap! as brave, good-hearted a fellow as ever breathed, though somewhat of a Methodist. And the captain, too. It's a bad job indeed."

"We won't give up the captain yet," said the coxswain, "nor sail home till there's no hope left of picking him up."

When the vessel parted the three men, who were standing close together, disappeared simultaneously. The captain, separated from the other two, rose to the surface some distance off. He was seen clinging to a spar, by the help of which the lifeboat crew hoped he would succeed in keeping himself afloat till they reached him. They were making towards him when they threw the buoy to Martin. In fact the saving of the mate had not hindered them a moment in their efforts to rescue the captain, too. But he had disappeared. Not a trace of him was to be seen; still they would not give up all for lost. They rowed up and down amid the wilderness of foaming waters which broke over those fatal sands; they searched among the broken timbers, spars, and torn cordage which strewed that turbulent

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sea. Beaten hither and thither by the wild waves and buried in the surf, they persevered for more than an hour; then the coxswain said, sadly, —

"There's no good staying here any longer, lads; the poor captain can't be alive now. No one could live so long in such a sea as this. May the Lord have mercy upon him!"

"I'm sure you've done your best to save him, and we thank you heartily," said the second mate, with tears in his eyes. "He was a good captain and a kind master. I don't expect I shall ever sail with such a one again. Poor Martin! if he ever comes to what a blow it'll be to him."

"Who do you mean?" asked the coxswain.

"Why, our chief officer, the young fellow lying there as if he were dead — he's the captain's son; ah! they were fond of each other, there's no mistake."

"Poor young chap," said the coxswain, feelingly; "it'll bad news he'll hear if he recovers; it must be broken be gently to him at first, or it may go hard with him."

"That it must," said the second mate; "but he don't look to me as if he'd ever come to; I think he's already gone to join his father."

Now rowing with all their might, now under their small sail, the hardy boatmen made for Margate harbor. It was a long pull through mountains of surf under a cold, dismal sky. They were satisfied at having accomplished their noble object, but, as in most things in this world, their joy was tinged with sadness. Their failure in saving the life of the captain, who, it was the opinion of all, had been stunned by being thrown against some of the floating wreckage, and losing consciousness had sunk to rise no more, caused them deep regret and disappointment. But there was consolation in the assurance that they had done their utmost to save him, to which all the crew of the "Star of Devon" bore the strongest testimony. When

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they heard from their lips what a good, upright man he was, the more serious among them knew that it was well with him now, and that he had passed from the raging turmoil of that troubled sea into the peaceful haven of the Paradise of God.

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CHAPTER XVI.

JACK.

"Choke up the temple gate with dust and ashes,
With all pollution make the windows dark,
Yet through some unexpected crevice flashes
The feeble glimmer of the deathless spark.

As springs lie hidden in their secret chambers,
Still lacking force to burst the rock's control;
As power electric sleeps beneath the amber,
So lies the life of God within the soul.

In the dark spirits of our hapless brothers,
Faint gleams are kindled from the central sun,
The same warm life that makes the joy of others,
For fire, and life, and love, and God, are one."

—LADY C. ELLIOT.

THE dreary day was fading into a still drearier twilight when the lifeboat arrived in Margate harbor. Crowds had been watching her for hours, since she was first seen a mere speck on the gloomy horizon. Now they all hurried to the pier and jetty-head to see her enter the port; eyes were strained to discern if she had brought back any ship-wrecked men; every one was eager to learn what had been the result of her perilous voyage.

As soon as she approached sufficiently near for her living freight to be discovered a hearty cheer rent the air—her noble mission then had not been in vain, she had found the wreck for which she had gone in search, and saved some lives, if not all, from perishing in the deep.

Every one hastened down to the landing-place to learn particulars about the wreck, and the gallant rescue. The story was soon passed on from one to another, till it spread

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throughout the crowd. The sad loss of the captain, which damped the spirits of the lifeboat crew, was the only incident which marred the universal joy of the sympathizing throng on the quays. The condition of the first mate, too, excited heartfelt compassion, which was much increased when it was rumored that he was the captain's son, and that, owing to his stunned and unconscious condition, he as yet knew nothing of his father's sad fate.

Still showing no signs of life, Martin was carried on shore to a neighboring house, followed by his shipmates. A doctor was at once sent for. After examining the patient, he gave it as his opinion that he was only stunned and utterly exhausted; he ordered the immediate application of restoratives, a warm bath, and rubbing of the extremities. His words not a little cheered his friends among the crew, as well as his brave rescuers, who had begun to fear that the mate's as well as the captain's life was to fall a sacrifice to the gale which had wrecked their ship.

After the doctor's directions had been carried out, Martin began to show signs of life. He heaved several deep sighs, groaned, and then opened his eyes, staring vacantly around, but he soon closed them again without speaking, and fell into a deep sleep. At this the doctor expressed his satisfaction, giving directions that he was to be closely watched, and have some stimulants as soon as he awoke; he left him in charge of the people of the house, who had persuaded his mates to leave him, and get themselves the rest they so greatly required after their long night and day of exposure, suffering and hard battling with winds and waves. Jack, who showed more anxiety about Martin than any of the others did, enjoined the good folk to take good care of him, adding that he would come to look after him the first thing in the morning, to see how he was getting on.

Martin awoke before midnight, but after taking the stimulant which the doctor had ordered he again sank into a

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deep slumber, in which Jack Adams found him early in the morning. He was soon joined by the second mate, Robinson, who sat at his bedside watching till he woke again.

Meanwhile, the news of the sad disaster which had befallen the "Star of Devon," the loss of the captain and of the five men who had perished in the cutter, had been telegraphed to Plymouth. The owners wired at once that the men should immediately be conveyed home at their expense. Grieved as Messrs. Willis & Dobbs were at the loss of their fine ship, the death of such an excellent and trustworthy skipper as Captain Archer caused them still deeper regret.

They telegraphed to the agents at Margate that every attention should be paid to his son, the first mate of the shipwrecked vessel, and the best medical advice secured.

While the second mate and Jack Adams were sitting by Martin's bedside, a telegram came to the former instructing him to proceed to Plymouth without delay, bringing the rest of the crew with him.

"Well, Jack," he said, "here's a message come from Willis & Dobbs, ordering us all to leave by first train and come straight to Plymouth, so I suppose we must be stirring. I'll go and look up the rest of our chaps, and find out when the train goes."

"I sha'n't go," replied Jack.

"Of course you must obey orders like the rest of us," said the mate.

"Do you think I'm going to leave this poor young chap here to wake up and find himself among strangers, and with no face he knows to greet him? No, I'll stay here till he gets better, and you can tell Willis & Dobbs so."

"But you'll lose your pay, Jack, and a chance of getting a berth in their next ship."

"I don't care if I do; I'm not such a brute as to leave our chief officer in this plight. I'd be an ungrateful dog if I did, for he was very kind to me last voyage."

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"If you stay, Jack, you must take the consequences," replied Robinson. "I am very glad, for my own part, that Martin Archer should have a friend with him, and I'll make the best of it to Willis & Dobbs, you may depend upon it."

"Thank you, Robinson, that's right," said Jack, "and when he's fit to travel I'll bring him along with me to Plymouth."

"Very well, Jack, but now I must be off; I'll look in for the last time before we start."

The second mate had scarcely left the house when Martin began to rouse; after vacantly gazing round the room he fixed his eyes on Jack's face, but said nothing.

Jack, who had received particular instructions not to excite him or let him talk, was also silent, and only greeted him with a friendly nod. At that moment the doctor arrived. He said his patient was going on as favorably as could be expected, but that his system had received a terrible shock, not only from the exposure and great exertion which he had suffered, but principally from the severe blow on his head when he was dashed against the boat which he was struggling to enter.

The doctor was greatly pleased to learn that Jack was going to remain to nurse his mate; it was much better for him than to be left among strangers. Before starting for Plymouth most of the men came in to take a look at the first mate, and say good-by to Jack, who still turned a deaf ear to every proposal to induce him to quit his post.

"Here I shall stick till he's better," he said; "no one shall ever say that Jack Adams forsook a sick and wounded shipmate who'd done him a good turn once."

Though Martin was now able to take some food, he did so mechanically, because it was almost forced upon him; he was still silent and very soon fell asleep again; Jack, requesting the woman of the house to look after him, took this opportunity of going out for a stroll. He was joined

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by many of the boatmen, and being the only man of the crew of the "Star of Devon" now left in Margate, became the hero of the hour, having to repeat the story of the wreck and the terrible sufferings of the night many times to eager and interested audiences. Jack was a man who dearly loved a glass, indeed he was by no means innocent of occasionally taking one too much. Now was a fine opportunity for this indulgence, for all were eager to treat him. The lifeboat men told how splendidly he had hurled the rope, how courageously he had swum to the boat, battling with the fierce waves; then his generosity in remaining with the mate was in the mouths of all, who wished to show their appreciation of the brave sailor and his deeds by the only means in their power.

But Jack sternly refused all invitations to drink. His first duty was to his friend. If he took one glass he was sure not to stop there, and if he got drunk what use would he be to Martin? In that case he would do more harm than good. To avoid the temptation, which to him was a strong one, he turned away from his group of admirers, saying that it was time for him to go and look after his mate.

He had not been sitting long by his side when Martin awoke. This time, after looking intently at Jack for some time, he said in a low voice—

"It's you, isn't it, Jack? Where are we?"

"Yes, it's me—Jack Adams, Mr. Archer. There's no mistake about that; and this place we're in is called Margate."

"And the ship and the rest of the crew, Jack, and my father?"——

"The ship's all broke up and gone to pieces on the sands, all owing to that rascally pilot, I believe; and as to the crew, they've all gone off to Plymouth this morning .... But you're ill, mate, and I've orders not to let you talk, but to keep you quiet; so just go to sleep again, and don't ask any more questions, for I can't answer 'em."

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"Just answer one or two, Jack, and I promise you I'll be quiet. It seems to be coming back to me now — that awful night, the gale, clinging to the mast, and then a plunge into the sea and a hard swim. After that — all is dark. But the captain, Jack?" he said, eagerly, "my father? has he gone to Plymouth? Why did he leave me? I suppose he was obliged to go!"

"Now don't be a-worreting and a-fretting yourself about them things, mate, but just turn round and get the sleep the doctor says is the best thing in the world for you. I told you I wouldn't answer you."

Martin, with a deep sigh, let his head fall back on the pillow. Jack was terribly perplexed. What could he do if the question about the captain was persistently repeated? He could not tell a downright untruth and say the captain was alive. Moreover, that would be of no real avail, as Martin was sure to find out the truth in time, while to parry his inquiries with indirect answers would only excite his suspicions, and induce him to repeat his questions with greater urgency.

Flight, therefore, was his only resource. He got up and was about to leave the room when Martin, seeming stronger and much refreshed, raising himself in the bed called out to him —

"Jack, Jack, don't leave me. Why are you going?"

"Because you are to be quiet and not talk, Mr. Archer."

"But I'm better and stronger now, Jack. Do stay. Why are you here? Why didn't you go to Plymouth with the rest?"

"Well, you see, Mr. Archer, I didn't feel altogether comfortable at leaving you with these 'ere strangers. You was very bad last night, and some of us didn't think then you'd ever open your lips again. But, thank goodness, you're on the mend now. You was very kind to me last voyage when I was ill, and you know one good turn de-

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serves another. But bless me! I'm talking too much. I must go."

"Stay, stay, Jack, one moment. How can I thank you for your kindness! I never should have expected it of you. But now tell me, I implore you, where is my father? Was the captain saved last night? We stood side by side when the ship parted. Did the lifeboat save him?"

Poor Jack was indeed in a sad fix. What could he do? To leave the room without answering would prove that he could give no cheering reply to the question. He felt sure that Martin would never rest now till he knew the truth. He turned back, sat down by the bedside, and took Martin's hand, looking very kindly into his face; a tear stood in the rough sailor's eye, and then trickled down his weather-beaten cheek. He said not a word. His look, his manner, told Martin the sad, sad truth.

The poor fellow was not altogether unprepared for it. With returning consciousness he had gradually been recalling to his mind the terrible memories of the previous day and night; how he and his father had clung together to the mast; the solemn words which had passed between them; with what sorrowful but calm resignation his father had referred to the possibility of his death and of Martin being saved. He remembered how they were standing side by side when they were separated by the sudden breaking-up of the ship, and of the last words he heard from those beloved lips: "Thank God that so many are safe." Still, he had not given up all hope; he and Jack Adams had both been saved by the lifeboat. Was it likely, then, that the captain had perished? He felt that he must know the truth; though he was still terribly weak and confused in his brain, anything would be better than this agonizing suspense. Jack's hesitating manner and refusal to speak all confirmed his worst fears — he could have no rest till he had forced an answer from his companion. And now that answer had come; though unspoken, it was

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not the less certain, he read it in his friend's sorrowing countenance and in his tearful eyes.

"O Jack, is it so?" he groaned, as he pressed his friend's hand. "Is the captain, my dear father, really drowned?"

Jack nodded his head sadly, but did not speak. His rough but kindly nature was deeply touched by Martin's grief; he knew well enough how warmly attached the captain and his son were, and what a crushing blow this must be to his friend. He was alarmed, too, at having let out the secret; he feared the effect it might have on Martin in his present exhausted state.

"There's no hope, then — no hope! I see plainly enough, Jack," he sighed; and then falling back on his pillow gave way to the agony of his grief.

Jack felt powerless to comfort him. No words of his could bring back the lost or alleviate his sorrow. He sat in silence by his side. There the doctor found him when, soon after, he came in to see his patient. He was shocked and vexed to find him in such an agitated condition. He called Jack out and said to him severely: —

"You have not proved yourself such a good nurse as I expected, my man. I told you not to talk to your friend. You have evidently informed him of the captain's death, and this mental shock, following such bodily exhaustion, may have very serious results. You should have followed my instructions, and been more cautious."

"I couldn't help it, sir, upon my honor," replied Jack. "I never spoke a word, or answered one of his questions; but when he kept on asking of me where the captain was, and if he'd been saved, I was going out of the room; then he called out, 'Jack, I must know if he's saved or not.' I didn't say a word, but he couldn't help reading the truth on my face; besides, sir, he knowed well enough if his father had been living I'd have been glad enough to tell him so outright."

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"I see, my man," said the doctor; "you were placed in a difficult position, and perhaps you could not have acted otherwise; at all events, I am sure you did your best. Now keep him as quiet as you can. I shall give him something to make him sleep again."

"That'll be the best thing, for him, sir, I'm sure," replied Jack, who now returned to his friend's bedside. Martin was too much absorbed in his grief to speak, but Jack watched patiently by him till he at last sank to sleep; but it was a restless slumber, for he would start up every now and then, and call on his father in piteous tones; then he seemed to fancy himself on board ship again, and gave out his orders to the men. Gradually, however, he became quieter, and Jack was able to throw himself down on a mattrass which had been provided for him on the floor by his mate's side, and get the rest of which he himself so greatly stood in need.

Next morning Martin was decidedly better. He was terribly sad and depressed, scarcely spoke a word, but appeared calm and resigned. The doctor said that the mental shock he had received the day before had not had the injurious effect he had feared, but that he still must be kept very quiet. Now and then he would say a kind word of thanks to Jack, but he showed no inclination to talk; his mind was completely taken up dwelling on the terrible events of yesterday and realizing the irreparable loss he had sustained. Life seemed quite changed to him now, he viewed everything under a different aspect; the bond of affection and sympathy between father and son had been so close and intimate, and now that it was severed, as far as this world was concerned, he experienced an overwhelming feeling of loneliness and isolation. Then the holy lessons he had learned at home, the consolations and promises of religion, dawned upon his afflicted soul. He thought of that Communion of Saints in which he had asserted his belief whenever he repeated the Creed; he remembered

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how often he had heard it explained by the parson: now he began to realize its comfort and its truth. He remembered, too, the verse he had often sung:

> "One family we dwell in Him,
> One Church above, beneath,
> Though now divided by the stream,
> The narrow stream of death."

That his beloved father was at rest and in peace he had not the shadow of a doubt. And he prayed that God would give him strength and faith to follow his example, and lead as noble and God-fearing a life as the good captain had done.

The thought of Kate cheered him not a little; he remembered, too, the many duties devolving upon him by his father's death, the chief of which was the care of his aged grandmother, who would feel the death of her only and affectionate son very keenly. Then if God restored him to health and strength, he had his profession to follow; his father had often impressed on him the duty of working steadily with the fixed determination of attaining the highest position in it. Surely, to follow the brave example of his father would be a fresh incentive; he must strive to be an honor to him who had passed away nobly at his post, who had lost his life in the performance of his duty. God had saved his own life for some wise purpose; his object, therefore, must be conscientiously and perseveringly to do the work he had appointed for His glory, and for the benefit of his fellow-men.

These were the thoughts that crowded in his mind during the many hours that he lay silently on his bed. Jack scarcely ever left him, but in accordance with the doctor's orders did not encourage him to talk.

Martin, after a long sleep in the afternoon, was much brighter towards evening. From the first he had been deeply impressed by Jack's kindness and generosity. He should never have expected it of him. He felt now how

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little insight he had into his friend's real character. This was the second voyage they had made together. When Jack had served with Martin before on board the "Diana" he did not come with the best reputation. He was a rough sort of fellow, always implicated in any scrimmage which took place on board, fond of skylarking, and occasionally given to drink. His strength, activity, and good humor, though he was somewhat hot-tempered, made him a general favorite on board, but he had not been much thrown with Martin till on the return voyage he was taken very ill with a fever, which he had probably contracted in the West Indies. Some thought that the disease was infectious: Jack was isolated from the rest of the men, and many who had previously been his most intimate associates now declined to come near him. Martin, however, who had learned the lesson that self must be forgotten when another can be helped or benefited, was very constant in his attentions to Jack Adams. After taking his watch at night, he would, instead of turning in when the hour for rest came, go and sit by Jack's berth while he was raving in his delirium, doing all in his power to soothe him. When he began to get better and regained his senses, which was only a few days before they got into port, though he was still so weak he could not move from his berth, Martin would drop in whenever he could to cheer him up; he talked seriously to him about his past life, implored him to profit by the lesson he had learned in his sickness, and to spend the life which God had spared in His service. He read frequently to him from the Bible, Jack always listening with deep attention and apparent interest. But although he was never weary of thanking Martin for his kindness to him, he made no promises of amendment — his heart and conscience seemed to be untouched. On arriving in Plymouth, Jack had been taken to the hospital, and Martin had lost sight of him till the day when he found him among the crew of the "Star of Devon."

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The voyage which had now terminated so disastrously had been too short for much intercourse between them. Martin had expressed his pleasure at seeing Jack restored to health when he first came on board, and some friendly words had been exchanged, but they had not been brought much together till the exciting moment when they stood side by side on the deck throwing the rope to the lifeboat men.

"I can never repay you for your kindness to me, Jack," said Martin, grasping his hand; "you have been a real friend in need to me. I don't know how I should have got on without you."

"Don't talk about that, mate," said Jack, "I'm repaid enough by seeing you get better. Besides, I've never forgot how you used to come and sit by me when I had that fever on board the 'Diana.' It sha'n't be said that Jack Adams is an ungrateful dog, though he's a rough sort of chap I'm ready to confess."

"But now I'm getting better, Jack, you surely won't stay on; you might lose a good berth on board some ship, or a chance of promotion."

"I mean to keep on here till you're able to start with me, Mr. Archer," replied Jack. "I'll see you safe at Plymouth."

"If that's your determination, Jack, I must do my best not to keep you here long, and get well as quickly as I can."

"The doctor said this morning," said Jack, "that you're getting on first-rate, much better than he ever expected: that youth and a good constitution are all in your favor."

"Thank God, there's no doubt I do feel stronger and better to-day, Jack; deeply as He has seen fit to afflict me in taking my dear father, He has indeed been very gracious to me in sparing my life. It is true of me as of the Psalmist, 'Thou calledst upon me in trouble and I delivered thee, and heard thee what time as the storm fell upon

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thee.' Do you know, Jack, whether those two small books I had in my pocket when I was thrown into the sea were saved?"

"Well, they're saved, mate, but they're terribly soaked with salt water; when you were undressed I got hold of your clothes and took everything out of the pockets, because I was sure there were things in 'em you valued and would not like to lose; there's two or three letters and a photograph of a young lass, and those two small books you ask me about. I've been drying 'em all before the fire and in the sun, but they're very wet still; I don't think they'll ever get right again."

"Let's look at 'em, Jack, please."

Jack produced the articles alluded to, as well as several others found in Martin's pockets.

Kate's photograph, marred and soiled as it was by the salt water, brought happy, cheering thoughts into Martin's mind; the letters, too, were from her; they were scarcely legible now, but they seemed to remind him vividly of the writer. As he was looking at them, Jack observed, —

"May I be so bold to ask if that 'ere young woman is your sweetheart, Mr. Archer?"

"Yes, she is," replied Martin, changing color.

"I thought as much. She must be a comely lass if the picture is like her."

Martin now took up the two small books, which were sadly soaked, the leaves sticking together in many places, and the covers limp and sodden. They were a Testament and a Prayer-book, with Hymns Ancient and Modern, at the end; they had always accompanied Martin on his voyages, and were rarely absent from his pocket. They had been given to him on the day of his Confirmation by Mr. Newberry.

"You're very fond of them two little books, sir," said Jack. "I remember you used to read to me out of them

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when I was getting better on board the 'Diana.' There was some very fine things in them which I ain't forgotten yet."

"I'm glad of it, Jack. I hope you've been trying to lead a better life since those days."

"I can't say much about that, mate," replied Jack. "I don't think I'll ever be a saint or a Methodist; I'm not altogether cut out for that sort of thing."

"At all events, by your conduct to me you've acted like a good Christian, Jack—like the good Samaritan we read of in the Gospel."

"Oh, I remember—the chap that looked after the wounded man and set him on his ass, and took him to the inn? That's an old story. I heard it in my childhood."

"You seem to have profited by the example, Jack."

"These stories and passages out of the Bible which my poor mother told me, and which I heard at school, come up into my mind quite fresh like now and then. When you used to read them to me in my bunk in the forecastle they didn't seem altogether new," said Jack.

"Then you went to school when you were young, and learnt something about God and our Saviour at home, Jack?"

"Oh, yes, mate. My mother was a regular Methodist; she was a widow, for my father was drowned at sea just before I was born. We lived at Falmouth. I was sent to school regularly, and went to church every Sunday till my poor mother died, and then I fell into the hands of an old drunken villain of an uncle, who treated me so bad that I ran away to sea. I got into bad company, as you may easily imagine, and soon forget all the lessons I'd learned from my good mother. I scarcely ever thought about religion till I was ill that time on board the 'Diana,' and you used to talk so seriously to me, mate."

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"Perhaps you'll read a bit to me now, Jack," said Martin. "My head swims, and I feel dizzy when I look at the small print — you'll do me a great favor."

"I'm a terrible bad scholar, Martin," said Jack. "I've a difficulty sometimes to spell out the words in the newspaper."

"Never mind — try; there's a good chap; I'll help you out; it'll do me more good than anything."

"Well, if it 'll do you good, I'll try and do my best, mate," answered Jack.

Martin found the Twenty-third Psalm, which he asked Jack to read. It was slow work; but as Martin knew it by heart, he told him the words he could not make out. Then he attempted a chapter from the Gospels. Much of what he read seemed to be familiar to Jack — texts long since forgotten, warnings and admonitions which had fallen from his mother's lips, now came back clearly to his mind. His better nature, which had for so many years been suppressed and held in bondage by sin, began to revive; his conscience, which habitual familiarity with evil had almost deadened, was aroused; the strivings of the blessed Spirit made themselves felt.

Jack told Martin much about his past life; it had been rough and hard enough; he had sometimes been associated with utterly godless and desperate characters. Blasphemy and vice of every kind had been familiar to him from his boyhood. Now and then, after the commission of some great sin, he would be filled with alarm; his slumbering conscience would awake and warn him of his danger; he would feel a desire to amend and lead a better life; but very soon all those good thoughts would vanish from his mind in the society of his bad companions, and in the indulgence of those enticing sins to which he fell so easy a victim. Till he became acquainted with Martin he had always despised Methodists, as he called those who led steady, sober, religious lives. He looked upon them as a

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poor, cowardly set: a good, hardy seaman could never be turned out of such as them. But he had changed his mind altogether on that subject; he had joined with the other men of the crew very often in jeering and laughing at Martin on account of his religion when he first came on board the "Diana," but he soon felt ashamed of his conduct on perceiving what a fine, courageous sailor he was; and after his illness, during which Martin had acted with such self-denying kindness towards him, he had been filled with remorse for his previous behavior. When he left the hospital it was with the resolve, if it were possible, to do something to show Martin his gratitude, and how bitterly he repented having said or done anything before to vex him.

Martin was much cheered in his sorrow by listening to what Jack told him; he was very thankful, indeed, that his attention to him, which at the time he felt was a duty he owed to any fellow-seaman, should have aroused such feelings in him — feelings which he hoped might result in a change of heart and life.

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CHAPTER XVII.

A RECOVERY AND A RETURN.

"Thou who hast lost and yet dost love,
Thou, too, a Father hast in some dim sphere above,
Who doth regard thy joys, thy miseries,
Thy petty doubts of Him, thy feeble learning,
Thy faults, thy pains, thy childish doubts and yearning."
— ODE OF LIFE.

"Sure he was sound in heart whatever his head might be,
And if not very devout, he was devoted to me."
— HILDA AMONG THE BROKEN GODS.

ON the fourth morning after the arrival of the shipwrecked crew at Margate the coxswain of the lifeboat came to the house where Martin and Jack lodged, and asked to see the latter. The serious expression on his countenance indicated that he had some important communication to make.

When Jack came to the door he said, "I've come to tell you that your captain's body was picked up by one of our luggers last night — he's lying in the boathouse on the pier; we want to know what's to be done about it."

"Has he, indeed?" said Jack; "well, I'm glad to hear it for one reason, my mate inside has been taking on so about his father not having Christian burial, and this 'll be some little consolation to him, I know."

"Will you come and look at your poor skipper, Jack?"

"Yes, that I will," he replied; and both then set off together for the boathouse.

The stern, rugged features of the captain were not as yet in the least disfigured; there was, too, a calm and peaceful expression on them as of one who had fallen at his post of duty, and was perfectly ready to meet his Saviour and his

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Judge. Jack, rough and sturdy fellow as he was, could not gaze on the well-known face of the late captain unmoved, nor restrain the tears which rolled down his bronzed cheeks. He was thinking of Martin more than of himself, and of the deep grief the latter was enduring at his heavy loss. For some minutes he stood gazing at the corpse without saying a word. The coxswain at last broke the silence and remarked —

"What had best be done about burying your captain, mate? Do you think you can venture to ask his son about it?"

"No, I'm of opinion that it would do Martin harm to be told about it just now; he'd want to see his father sure enough, and quite natural, too, and though the poor captain looks happy enough, it would very likely make him ill again; so I'll just say nothing about it at present, but telegraph to Willis & Dobbs, at Plymouth, to know what's to be done."

"All right," said the other, "that's what we all thought would be the best course to take. In an hour's time we'll get the answer, and then act accordingly."

The telegram was immediately dispatched. The reply was that Captain Archer's body was to be put in a coffin at once and sent to Plymouth. All expenses of the funeral would be defrayed by Messrs. Willis & Dobbs — it was the least they could do to show their appreciation of the long and faithful services of one of their best captains, whose loss they so deeply deplored.

By the last train that evening the body was forwarded to Plymouth; not a hint of the matter was breathed to Martin, who was now rapidly regaining strength; he had left his bed, and on the day after the recovery of the captain's body went out of doors for the first time, and, supported by Jack's arm, took a turn in the sun. He wrote a short letter to Kate, too, for he knew how anxious she must feel about him.

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In the evening, as he and Jack were sitting by the fireside, he remarked:

"Have you ever asked the men about here, Jack, whether they think there's any chance of my poor father's corpse being thrown ashore, or picked up anywhere? Though I know it's all the same thing to him, and that many a brave seaman who has perished in the exercise of his duty, as he has done, rests beneath the deep till the day when the sea shall give up her dead, yet to me and my grandmother, too, it would be some little comfort to give him Christian burial; and I've heard my good father say, too, that he hoped one day to rest beside my mother and my brother and sisters in the Plymouth Cemetery."

Jack made no reply; he was reflecting whether it would be advisable to tell his friend the truth at once, or defer doing so for a few days. Martin, perceiving his hesitation, began to imagine what had occurred.

"Why don't you speak, Jack, surely you don't mean that" ——

"Set your mind at rest on that point, Martin," said Jack at last, "your father the captain is by this time beneath the sod of the Plymouth Cemetery. He was picked up by a lugger on Tuesday night, Wednesday morning the lifeboat coxswain came and told me; I telegraphed to Plymouth to ask Willis & Dobbs what to do, and they ordered that he was to be put up in a coffin and sent off at once to Plymouth. This was done that same night."

"And you never told me about it," said Martin, reproachfully; "that wasn't kind of you, Jack."

"It was all done for the best, Mr. Archer, and the doctor told me I was quite right — it'd only make you worse again. You'd have wanted to see your father; you couldn't have done that without getting up and going out of doors; you weren't fit for that then, and what good could you have done to the captain, I should like to know?"

"Ah! only to have seen him once more, Jack, to have

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looked at his dear face again, it would have been a comfort to me. Was he much altered?"

"No more altered than all are by death and by exposure to the sea; he looked quite calm and happy."

"Well, Jack, I'm sure you did it for the best," said Martin, sadly, "and I feel very thankful to know that my dear father rests among his family, and not in a watery grave."

"I've put by all his clothes and what we found in his pockets, Martin; they're much torn and knocked about, and the books he had in his pockets soaked through and through with salt water," said Jack.

"Thank you, Jack; I'll look over them to-morrow," replied Martin.

The following day Martin had a letter from Kate. She told him what agony she had suffered when the dreadful news of the total wreck of the "Star of Devon" first arrived in Plymouth. Overwhelmed with grief as she was, she never gave up all hope — she trusted that her prayers would be answered, and that Martin would be among the saved. Great, indeed, then was her joy and thankfulness when the tidings came that the first mate was among the rescued, but sorrow was mingled with her happiness on hearing that Captain Archer had been drowned. What a heavy blow this would be to Martin she well knew: she felt powerless to comfort him, she could only express her deep and affectionate sympathy in his bitter grief. Then she related to him all about the funeral ceremony, which she had attended that day. She knew how he would like to hear the particulars from her. The captain's coffin, borne by seamen who had served under him, was first taken into the church, where Mr. Newberry read the service. Then, followed by the choir, a large number of sailors, the shipowners, and a great many old friends, it was carried through the streets to the cemetery, where Mr. Newberry concluded the service; the hymn, "Jesus lives," was sung by the choir at the grave; and then Mr. Newberry delivered a

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short, solemn, and heart-stirring address. He spoke, he said, from personal knowledge of Captain Archer, who had been his intimate friend for years; his life, he said, had been entirely devoted to a strict performance of his duty, both to God and man. He was a thoroughly conscientious man, humble, brave, earnest in everything, always trusting implicitly in the love and goodness of his heavenly Father, knowing that He would do all for the best, and, with simple dependence on his Saviour to direct him in the right way, had persevered through good repute and evil repute till he had won the respect and confidence of his employers as well as the love and esteem of many of those whose good fortune it was to serve under him. He had never made a parade of his religion. He was totally destitute of cant. He had lived Christianity rather than talked about it. He had set a splendid example not only to seamen, but to all in every class, which they might well profit by. He had lived that noblest life of all, the life that forgets self, and he had died a brave, self-denying death — he had seen all his crew safe into the lifeboat before he would give a thought to his own preservation, and by this act of generosity he had perished. He had humbly endeavored to follow the blessed steps of his divine Master, Who had now called His faithful servant into His eternal joy. From the storm-tossed sea and the furious waves he had passed into the blessed rest of the redeemed. He had indeed endured his full share of the sufferings, the bereavements, the trials of life, but he had borne them meekly and with submission to the will of God, as he, the speaker, could well testify, and he told the touching story of how he had lost his wife and children by the cholera while absent on a voyage; but this was all over now: he had been faithful unto death, and hereafter should receive a crown of life. "May he rest in peace, and may we all have grace and strength given us to follow the noble example he has set us" were the parson's concluding words.

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Among the crowd who gathered round the grave there was scarcely a dry eye. Most of the men who had been with him on board the ship and had been rescued by the lifeboat were there, and they naturally were the most deeply affected.

"I had bought some flowers in the morning," wrote Kate in her letter, "and I put them on the coffin before it was lowered into the tomb. I wanted to do something to show my love and respect to your dear father, and I was thinking all the time so much about you, Martin — how sorry you must feel not to be present, and how you must be grieving at the loss you have sustained, — that I burst into tears; but I was not the only one who wept over your father's grave, for some of the men cried like children."

Then she went on to express her anxiety about Martin's health, and her hope that he would soon recover and be able to return to Plymouth.

This letter was a great comfort to Martin. He was thankful to learn that so much respect and appreciation had been shown to his father's memory, and that he had been conveyed to his last resting-place by his own men, attended by his employers, and that the solemn words and prayers of the Church had been pronounced over his remains by his true friend and counsellor, Mr. Newberry. The only cause of regret was his own absence, but when he had so much to be thankful for he felt it would be wrong indeed to repine at that. His health and strength were now rapidly returning, he had a kind friend to watch over and care for him. His father's wish to rest among his kindred had been granted; and though he would never cease to mourn the irreparable loss he had sustained, he was able to thank God that it had pleased Him to deliver his father out of the miseries of this sinful world and to take him into His eternal rest. With eyes full of tears he looked through his well-worn Bible and Prayer-book, so soaked with sea-water that they were well-

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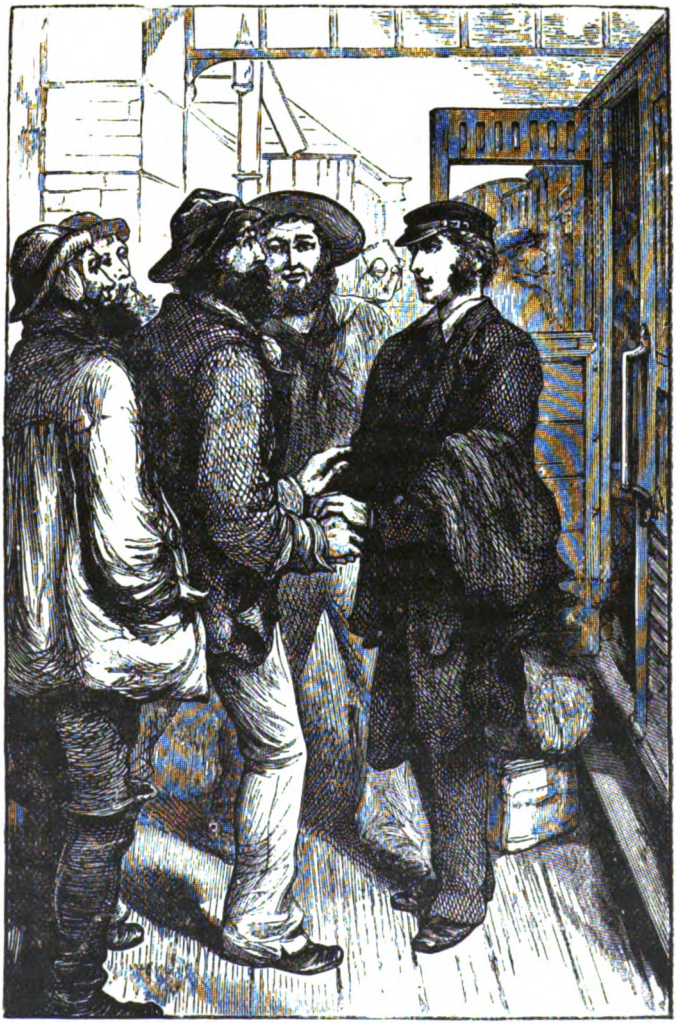

"Martin grasped the hand of the coxswain." — Page 249.

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ARTHUR LEE OF VIRGINIA
TILMAN FOUNDATIONS

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nigh illegible, — faithful companions of his voyages, which had helped and sustained him in many an hour of trial and danger, and would henceforth be sacred relics in his son's eyes.

Martin's youth and good constitution had been so greatly in favor of his rapid recovery that the doctor now consented to his leaving Margate, for, though still somewhat weak, he thought he was able to bear the journey home, and was aware how he was longing to return to his family and friends.

Accordingly one fine morning about ten days after the ever-memorable shipwreck of the "Star of Devon," Martin and Jack stood on the platform of the Margate railway station awaiting the train which was to take them to London on their way to Plymouth. The coxswain of the life-boat and a few of his men were there to say farewell, for quite a friendship had sprung up between them and the two seamen they had so happily rescued. As the train came up Martin grasped the hand of the coxswain, and once more heartily thanked him and his brave companions for their lives, which under God they had saved.

"I shall never forget you," he said, "and all your kindness to me; I only wish it were in my power to prove my gratitude; may God reward you for your good deeds."

"Don't think of that, friend," said the coxswain, "we're quite rewarded enough by seeing you look so well and hearty already. I'm sure when I helped to carry you on shore out of the boat I didn't think there was much hope for you. And as to saving your lives — that's our business, you know, to go into the great waters and rescue whoever we can that's in distress, and well we're repaid when we succeed, as, thank God, we did with you."

"God bless you," said Martin as he got into the train, — "God bless you all." He could not say a word more as he shook hands with the men one after the other.

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"Good-by, mates," cried Jack; "thank you for all your kindness, and if we meet again, I hope it may be under better circumstances." And as the train rolled off, he waved his hat from the carriage window, and raised a cheer, which was heartily responded to by the sailors on the platform. And so our two friends bade farewell to Margate and their heroic deliverers.

Jack was in high spirits. Martin, thankful as he was for his life spared and returning health, could not help feeling sad and depressed. His heavy bereavement ever and anon came with fresh force upon his burdened spirit. He was silent and reserved, — in striking contrast to his companion, who talked to every one in the carriage, relating the story of the wreck and the lifeboat rescue over and over again to each fresh traveller who entered the compartment.

They passed the night in London, and proceeded next day to Plymouth. Martin, after his illness, found the journey wearisome and fatiguing, though it was greatly enlivened by Jack's constant flow of spirits. His friend's hot and impulsive temper, however, now and then obliged Martin to interfere, as Jack, if contradicted, was inclined to be quarrelsome.

On arriving at Plymouth, Martin went at once to his father's house, where his grandmother was expecting him. The shock caused by her son's death had greatly affected the old woman's health. When they met it was a long time before either of them could utter a word. The great sorrow weighed more heavily than ever on their hearts. Everything around him in the house recalled his father to Martin's mind — the familiar chair he used to occupy, his books and papers, his clothes hanging on the walls. It was hard to believe that his place would know him no more; it seemed as if he were away as heretofore on one of his voyages. He could scarcely realize that all his voyages over the waves of this troublesome world were ended forever.

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In the evening by the fireside, when he had rested a little and had some food, he related, with choking voice, often interrupted by her sobs, to his grandmother the whole story of the short but fatal voyage, the last conversation he had held with his father as they clung to the rigging, the last words he spoke, ere the breaking-up of the ship separated them forever, and engulfed them in the furious surf. Then he told her of the bravery of the lifeboat men, how heroically they had ploughed their way through the wild, fierce tempest to the wreck, how nobly they had rescued the lives of the crew, how he had been stunned and lay senseless at the bottom of the boat, of Jack's self-denying kindness, and of the hospitality of the good folk at Margate.

His grandmother then tried to tell him about the funeral, which she herself was too weak and ill to attend, and of the deep respect which had been shown to her son, as well as the warm and hearty sympathy expressed on all sides for himself. But Kate, she said, had been her greatest comfort: every spare moment she passed with her, endeavoring to comfort her as best she could, reading the Bible and hymn-book, talking to her of Martin's speedy return home, and impressing on her what a cause of thankfulness it should be that, when both father and son might have perished, one was spared, so that God in His mercy had not left her altogether childless and alone.

Later on in the evening Jack looked in to see how his friend was getting on, and then both strolled out together. Martin, worn out and tired as he was, felt he could not sleep till he had seen Kate, so he turned his steps towards Stonehouse. The discovery of the photograph at Margate had led to Martin telling Jack all about his sweetheart; he was, therefore, not surprised when his friend told him whither he was bound. When they reached the corner of the street where Kate dwelt, Jack remarked: —

"Now, mate, I'll say good-night. You won't want my

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company any longer; I hope you'll find the girl well and hearty."

"Good-night, Jack," replied Martin; "come and look me up to-morrow, and be sure you let me know if I can be of any service to you."

"All right, Martin," he said, "good-night," and he vanished round the corner of the street.

Martin arrived before Aunt Sarah's house just as Kate was putting up the shutters; she knew that he was to arrive that day, therefore he was not unexpected; all day she had been thinking how he would bear the long journey, whether he would be much altered, how the great loss he had sustained would come with fresh force upon him on his return. When she heard footsteps behind her, and turning round saw, by the flickering light of the gas-lamp, Martin's pale, care-worn face, she started, and exclaiming—

"Martin! Martin! is it you?" she ran forward and seized him by both the hands which he held out to her, and then, overcome by emotion, fell weeping upon his breast.

"Thank God, dear Kate, that we are spared to meet once more!" said Martin, in a choking voice.

"Yes, indeed, Martin," she replied amid her tears, "but how ill you look still; how changed in the few weeks since we parted!"

But the conversation was suddenly cut short. Aunt Sarah, who was in the parlor behind the shop, had at once observed that Kate had stopped putting up the shutters; accordingly she rose from her seat, went into the shop, whence, through the unclosed gap in the window, she beheld, to her horror, Kate in the arms of a strange man in a sailor's dress. As Kate, who never mentioned Martin's name to her, had given her no intimation of his expected arrival, she did not at first associate him with this bold stranger. She rushed into the street, and with a profu-

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sion of angry words uttered in so shrill a voice that it was enough to arouse the attention of the whole neighborhood, seized her niece by the arm, and before she or Martin had time to say a word of explanation, had dragged her into the house, banged the shop door, bolted and locked it.

"Aunt! aunt, it's only Martin!" cried Kate; "how can you be so cruel? You've heard how his father, the captain, was drowned, and what a narrow escape he had himself, and how ill he has been: he's only just come back, and it's natural enough he should come and see me at once."

When the truth thus dawned upon Aunt Sarah it did not allay her wrath.

"You're not only a perfect disgrace to the whole neighborhood, miss, but you're making the home of a respectable woman like me a scandal; you're ruining my character by your shameful conduct: making appointments to meet young men in the dark in the street outside my house, indeed,"——

"I made no appointment, aunt; Martin came up just as I was closing the shutters, and I've told you before that we're engaged to be married, though, because you don't like it, I never talk about it. Was it not to be expected he would come to see me as soon as he got to Plymouth?"

"You'll not marry him with my consent, or if I can prevent it," said her aunt; "just take yourself off to bed, and let me hear no more of such nonsense, — bold, shameless girl that you are."

Kate knew that in her present fit of temper her aunt would not listen to a word of reason or common sense; she felt therefore it was better to obey, and retired to her room. Aunt Sarah then, muttering threats and imprecations, finished putting up the shutters after she had looked up and down the street to see if any traces of Martin were to be

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seen. But he, well acquainted with her disposition, and knowing that remonstrance from him would only irritate her the more, had retreated from the spot, reflecting how he could shorten the time of Kate's sojourn beneath her angry relative's uncongenial roof, and provide a happier home for her himself.

When Messrs. Willis & Dobbs heard of Martin's arrival at Plymouth, they sent to request him to come to their office as soon as he was able; next morning accordingly Martin presented himself at the Barbican, and was at once ushered in before the head partner, who addressed him in very kind and feeling language respecting his late father, enlarging on the services he had rendered to the firm, on his unvarying trustworthiness, on his skill, and thorough acquaintance with his profession. His loss to them was irreparable, for he was by far the best officer in their service. As to Martin himself, he said that his father's services were alone enough to make the firm indebted to his son, in addition to which, however, he had shown so many sterling good qualities, had passed by his own merits so rapidly to promotion, that they hoped to retain him permanently in their service, and held out the prospect of being able in a few years' time, when he had gained more experience, to give him the command of a ship, feeling certain that he would walk in his father's steps, and become as worthy of their confidence.

At present, for two reasons, he must remain ashore for a while: first, until his health was completely restored, and, secondly, to appear as a witness in the inquiry instituted by the Board of Trade on the disastrous wreck of the "Star of Devon." Martin respectfully thanked Mr. Willis for the kindness and esteem they had always shown to his father, as well as for the praise with which he had just spoken of himself. He hoped that he should never prove unworthy of the trust and confidence reposed in him; he would endeavor to do his duty by his employers, as his father had

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done, and be ready to take any berth they were willing to offer him, after the inquiry was ended.

That same afternoon Martin went to see his friend Mr. Newberry. Since hearing of the loss of the "Star of Devon" the good clergyman had passed a sad and anxious time; he was much attached both to Captain Archer and his son. He felt the loss of the former very deeply, and earnestly prayed that Martin's life might be spared. From a child he had taken the deepest interest in him, he knew every incident in his life, and was thoroughly acquainted with his virtues as well as his failings, for Martin had always been accustomed to make him his confidant.

His joy at seeing him once more was great indeed; he perceived at once the mental and bodily strain he had undergone, from the traces which sorrow and sickness had left upon his face. Very warm and affectionate was the greeting between them; it was a great comfort for Martin to be able to pour the sad tale of his grief and trials into the sympathizing ear of his old and faithful friend, with whom he could talk without any restraint, and who knew and valued so greatly the father whose loss he was still lamenting. He told him the sad, dreary story of their last voyage together, of the wreck, of his father's last words, of his own feelings when he thought that his last hour had come.

The parson listened with deep sympathy and interest. When Martin had finished, he told him how much he had always loved and esteemed his father. It would be wrong, he added, for them to repine, for if they believed the word and promises of God, they must have a sure and certain hope that the captain was at rest. After talking for some time with tender affection about the dear departed one, Mr. Newberry asked Martin what were his own intentions and prospects. He told him of his interview that morning with Messrs. Willis & Dobbs; he had no doubt, he said, as soon as he was well again that he should get a berth as chief

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officer on board one of their ships. He then asked his pastor's advice about his relations to Kate; he had known for some time that they were engaged, as well as the fierce opposition of Aunt Sarah to their union. Martin related to Mr. Newberry the adventure of the preceding evening, told him the difficulty they had in meeting, of Aunt Sarah's unkind treatment of her niece, and of her harsh judgment respecting himself. Mr. Newberry said he would think the matter over. Although Martin, who now came in for his father's savings, which were not inconsiderable, was, so far as money was concerned, able to support a wife, yet the parson thought he was fully young to marry yet, and that it would be advisable to wait for a couple of years, perhaps till he attained the post of master. He was but twenty-one, and had plenty of time before him. As to Kate, he would try to see her aunt and persuade her to listen to reason; she had no right, he felt, to exercise such despotic authority over her niece as to control her affections and blight her prospects in life.

Next day was Sunday, and Martin requested Mr. Newberry to mention his name before the general thanksgiving as one who desired to offer up his "praises and thanksgivings for late mercies vouchsafed to him."

As he was leaving the house he met Jack, who told him he had just been to Willis & Dobbs' office; he was in high glee, for he had been praised and complimented on his bravery and good conduct, and been told that his pay would continue all the time he was on shore, because as he would have to appear as a witness at the inquiry they could not give him a berth on board one of their vessels till it was over. Martin enjoined him to keep steady and not to fall into bad company: he promised to come to church next morning, and join Martin after the service.

During the next fortnight Martin rapidly regained his health and strength. Kate and he succeeded in meeting occasionally. Mr. Newberry had with some difficulty ob-

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tained an interview with Aunt Sarah, which, it is needless to say, was of a somewhat stormy character. She resented all interference by others between herself and her niece, and it was not till Mr. Newberry plainly but quietly told her that she had no right whatever to treat Kate as a mere slave, and bind her to her for life, thwarting her affections and ruining her future prospects, that she at last began to listen to reason. But she talked of Kate's ingratitude and deceitful conduct in such strong language that the clergyman stopped her to inquire what these acts consisted of. He said he always thought her niece bore an excellent character; she seemed quietness and steadiness personified; was constantly attending to her aunt's business, while her services in the shop were plainly so invaluable that she could not bear the idea of losing her. When the question was thus so pointedly put, Aunt Sarah could not reply, — the only act of ingratitude she could allude to was her intention of some day leaving her, and the solitary instance of bad conduct appeared to be meeting Martin outside the shop on the day when he returned home after the shipwreck. Mr. Newberry profited by this opportunity to endeavor to show her how harsh and unjust she was in her judgment of Kate, — how natural it was that she and Martin should become attached, and hope ultimately to become man and wife. Her dislike to Martin, he was convinced, arose from prejudice, — there was no one in Plymouth who could find a word to say against his character; her niece could not make a better match in whatever light they regarded it, for not only was Martin steady and respectable, but, owing to his rapid promotion, and his having lately come in to his father's savings, he was far better off as to worldly goods than most young men of similar age and position.

Aunt Sarah was one of those women to be found in all ranks of life, who, when they are once influenced by a prejudice, refuse to abandon it, however much they may

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inwardly be convinced of its folly and groundlessness. Although perceiving that she must give way at last, she maintained as firmly as before her opinion about Martin's character and Kate's ingratitude. She supposed, she said, that if Kate was determined to make a fool of herself and throw herself away on a harum-scarum sort of sailor like Martin, she couldn't prevent it, but she'd like to know how long the courting was going to last, — she didn't suppose that a sensible man like Mr. Newberry could sanction two such children being married next month, as doubtless they would, if they had their own way. The parson told her that neither Martin nor Kate contemplated such a thing; a year or two would elapse before they thought of marriage; and, as during the greater part of that period, Martin would be absent at sea, she would not be greatly annoyed by his presence. All he asked was that she should allow frequent interviews between them when he was at home; look upon their future union as a settled affair, and abstain from speaking harshly and unjustly about Martin to Kate, and reproaching her for her attachment to him as if it were a crime.

After a prolonged argument, many angry words, with tears and sobs of temper, from Aunt Sarah, he left her after having so far gained his point as to extract an unwilling promise that she would withdraw her open opposition to the engagement between Martin Archer and her niece.

The result of this interview was that Aunt Sarah became extremely silent and sullen, never speaking to Kate except to find fault, but she tacitly allowed her to see Martin occasionally, though his name was never mentioned between them. They met frequently now, especially on Sundays. They talked cheerfully of their plans for the future, and of the home they hoped ere long to share together, but to each a dark shadow seemed to come between that perfect happiness to which they once looked forward.

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Martin's heavy loss was ever present to his mind — his father's death had left a blank it was impossible to fill up — while Kate was constantly dwelling on the brother she loved so deeply, of whom now she had heard nothing for years; surely if he were alive he would have written to her. Martin, so well acquainted with Dan's reckless conduct, his utter forgetfulness of all home ties when he was under the influence of evil companions, did not share her fear, but he felt sure he must have sunk very low in vice and sin to have so completely forgotten the only being on earth who really loved and cared for him.

Martin, Robinson, the second mate, and several others of the crew of the "Star of Devon," received summonses to attend the Board of Trade inquiry in London, which lasted a week. After a prolonged investigation, it resulted in the entire blame of the disaster being thrown upon the pilot, who, after altogether losing his reckoning, as he himself confessed, had continued his course, though he must have been aware of the risk and danger he was running. The poor man had been so crushed and broken-down since the day of the wreck, he was so incapable of ever attempting to take charge of a ship again, that, in consideration of his age, and other extenuating circumstances, no sentence was passed upon him. Great praise was awarded to the captain and officers of the ship, as well as to the brave boatmen of Margate who had so gallantly saved the lives of the crew.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

THE YOUNG SKIPPER.

"Oh! worker of the world! to whose young arm
The brute earth yields, and wrong as to a charm;
Young seaman, soldier, student, toiler at the plough,
Or loom, or forge, or mine, a kingly growth art thou!
Where'er thou art, tho' earthly oft, and coarse,
Thou bearest with thee hidden springs of force,
Creative power, the flower, the fruitful strife,
The germ, the potency of life,
Which draws all things to thee unwittingly.
The future lies within thy loins, and all the days to be
To thee time giveth to beget
The thought that shall redeem and lift man higher yet."

— ODE OF LIFE.

As soon as Martin came back to Plymouth he lost no time in repairing to Messrs. Willis & Dobbs' office. He told them that as the inquiry was now over, and his health completely restored, he was ready to sail in any ship to which they might appoint him. Mr. Willis congratulated him on his recovery, as well as on the praise bestowed on him and the other officers of the "Star of Devon" during the trial. The post of chief mate on board his old ship the "Diana" was vacant, if he liked to accept it; she would be ready to sail next week; or if he preferred waiting, he could have the same berth in a larger vessel expected home in a month's time. Martin, not caring to be longer idle, chose the "Diana," asking as a favor that his friend Jack Adams might accompany him; the request was granted at once, and Martin found to his great joy that several more of

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his former shipmates would also be among the "Diana's" crew.

The captain was an old acquaintance, as he had sailed under him before; he was rather a surly and irreligious man, but as Martin was such a steady, trustworthy officer he had generally treated him well, and there had rarely been much difference between them. The week was spent in preparations and leave-taking. Kate and Martin were frequently together. Aunt Sarah, in the happy prospect of Martin's speedy departure, made but little effort to thwart their interviews. Kate promised to look after old Mrs. Archer, whose health had greatly suffered from the shock of her son's sad and sudden death, and who was fretting much at the idea of so soon losing her grandson and being left entirely alone.

When the day for sailing and bidding farewell arrived Martin had to make a strong effort to keep up his spirits. The recollection of his last departure from the port of Plymouth under such happy auspices in the "Star of Devon" as first mate under his father would force itself upon his mind; but he mastered his feelings, and once more mounted the deck of the "Diana" with a cheerful countenance. That his faithful friend Jack was with him was a source of great comfort. With a fair wind and a bright sky the "Diana" started on her voyage.

In this we shall not follow our hero. The "Diana" met with the ordinary variations of weather and the usual course of incidents. Martin in every respect proved himself an excellent officer, won the esteem and respect of the captain, and was popular with the men, excepting those who were lazy and insubordinate. Jack, in his character and conduct, did not altogether come up to Martin's expectations: he was hot-tempered and violent, frequently getting into scrapes, quarrelling and even fighting with his shipmates, and sometimes wanting in respect to the captain. Martin would often remonstrate with him,

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remind him of their conversation at Margate, and of the resolution to reform he then made. Jack always received these remarks in a friendly spirit: though he seemed to have forgotten his good resolve and occasionally fell into even gross sin, yet he was always faithful to Martin, whose word was law to him. Notwithstanding his wild and dissolute habits and his outbursts of temper, he was generous and brave, ready to forgive his foes, or to do a kind action to any one. Martin, therefore, as he anxiously watched the career of his friend and fervently prayed for his conversion, always hoped for the best. He was a very different and much more satisfactory character than his old acquaintance, Dan M'Carthy, of whom he often thought with sadness, wondering if he were yet alive, and if they would ever meet again.

We must now pass over a few years of Martin's life, in which he made several successful voyages in the "Diana" and other vessels belonging to Messrs. Willis & Dobbs. Jack, whose devotion to the chief mate continued undiminished, always sailed with him. In courage, impulsiveness, and unbridled conduct he remained much as ever.

On shore an event had occurred which had made some change in Kate's manner of life. Aunt Sarah, during a severe winter, had a very severe attack of rheumatic fever, which left her so crippled that she could only move from her bed to her chair. As all Kate's time was taken up in nursing her it was impossible to attend to the shop. Aunt Sarah, therefore, who had during these many years saved a considerable sum of money, consented, though reluctantly, to sell her business and retire. She and Kate moved into a small but cheerful house in one of the many terraces in Plymouth, occupied mostly by folk of their own class. Here she was so affectionately attended to by her niece, notwithstanding the increased irritation of temper produced by her ail-

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ments, that she softened considerably and treated Kate with far greater kindness than she had ever done before. To save her too much work she proposed herself to keep a servant. This gave Kate far more liberty, and she was able to divide her time between her aunt and old Mrs. Archer, to whom her visits were always welcome.

The first time that Martin came home after this change Aunt Sarah grumbled a little and spoke of Martin in the old snarling, ill-natured way. Kate, however, made no reply, and a few days later her aunt remarked that perhaps, after all, Martin Archer was not worse than any other young man; she had not lately heard anything against his character; they were all more or less depraved; but if Kate was so obstinate and self-willed as not to take her advice and follow her example by living a single life, she was of opinion she might just as well marry Martin as any one else. At the same time she enjoined her niece never to bring him to see her, for she'd seen quite enough of men in her lifetime.

Kate thanked her aunt for this unexpected concession, promising to keep her lover out of her way. Whenever Martin was in Plymouth he and Kate were now able without interference to meet as often as they desired.

Martin was twenty-two when he passed the examination which qualified him to receive a master's certificate. Messrs. Willis & Dobbs were so thoroughly satisfied with his conduct during the period he had now been in their employ — not only was he steady and trustworthy, but on many occasions had proved himself so skilful, too, showing a knowledge and experience byond his years — that they determined, young as he was, to give him the command of one of their vessels. The master of the "Curlew," a ship considerably smaller than the "Diana," had just been promoted to a larger craft. Martin was therefore appointed her captain, with the promise that if he acquitted himself well he should have a larger ship in a year's time.

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Kate shared Martin's delight at this promotion. They talked now cheerfully and confidently of the future, looking forward to their union as a comparatively near event. Not a word had been heard of Dan — his fate weighed very heavily on his sister's heart; it was almost hoping against hope to indulge the belief that he was still alive. Kate, who felt that the one good point in his character was his affection for her, was certain that if he was still living he could not so entirely have forgotten her as never to send her any tidings; but Martin could well believe how, having fallen lower and lower in the abyss of sin, he had become so thoroughly degraded and vicious as to have lost even his affection for his sister, though some calamity or trouble might suddenly revive it again, and bring him, as had been the case before, to a better mind.

Martin, gratified as he was by the confidence placed in him by his employers, was conscious of the heavy responsibility involved by his new post. It was not altogether with a light heart, therefore, that for the first time as a skipper he sailed from Plymouth in the "Curlew." The previous day he had had a long talk with his old and faithful friend, Mr. Newberry, to whom he had gone for counsel. He left him not a little cheered and encouraged.

His crew, which owing to the size of the vessel was smaller than the "Diana's," was a fairly steady one. Several of his old friends were among the men, but he missed his faithful Jack, who could not be spared this voyage from the "Diana." Jack burst into such a fit of ill-temper when his request to be transferred to the "Curlew" met with a refusal that he would have lost his situation altogether had it not been for Martin's intercession; moreover, the hope was held out to him that if he conducted himself well he should sail under Martin next voyage.

The youth of the skipper was decidedly against him; it was the greatest difficulty he had to contend with in his

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command. He had been rapidly promoted, through his own talents and good conduct, over the heads of much older men, who had once been his superiors, and now had to serve under him. Some chafed at this; they were not disposed to pay to the captain that respect due to his position. In his youth they forgot his office; both the first and second mate were older though not more experienced men than Martin Archer. There were those among the crew who determined to take advantage of their young skipper and have an easy time of it. They weren't going to submit to a boy like that, promoted by favoritism; they knew a great deal more about navigating a ship than he did; they were certain he'd make a mess of it before he'd been out a couple of days in the Channel, and then Messrs. Willis & Dobbs would see what fools they'd been to intrust the command of even a small brig like the "Curlew" to a chicken like Martin Archer. It might be supposed from these remarks that Captain Archer's appearance was very youthful; such, however, was not the case. Martin was tall and well built; he had already a good growth of hair on his face, and looked quite five-and-twenty. By strangers he would have been taken for that age; it was his misfortune to have men under him who belonged to his birthplace, and had known him from a child.

A man who has served long and faithfully in the school of obedience, who has willingly submitted to severe discipline in his early years, is far more fitted to command others than one who has not passed through this ordeal. He can feel for his subordinates, because he has been a subordinate himself. He knows the necessity of firmness, the importance of insisting on his orders being executed punctually and to the letter. Martin, perceiving at once the difficulty of his new position, had made up his mind that immediately on assuming the command he must forget his youth and only remember that he was master of the ship, and demand — even enforce, if necessary — strict obedi-

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ence to his orders. He knew that half the difficulties in this world arise from a want of energy and decision; moreover, that it is only the first step which costs, and that when his men had once learned by experience that they had not to deal with an easy, soft-hearted young fellow, but with a captain just but stern, who was determined to be master of his ship not in name only, he would have gained an important point, and make his path for the future smoother and clearer. In this resolution his conscience told him he was right. His employers had intrusted the ship and cargo to his charge, for which he was responsible. He was acting, therefore, not for himself, but for them. He was well aware that if he trusted to his own strength alone he would be likely enough to fail. He must, therefore, seek help where alone it could really be found — from the Lord Who hath made heaven and earth. He prayed fervently to be guided in all things by the Holy Spirit, to be kept from the sins of pride and self-confidence, from passion and temper, to be able to show kindness and sympathy to those who served under him, while at the same time he might have courage to rebuke and punish the wilfully disobedient or rebellious. He prayed that he might learn cheerfully to submit to the will of his Father in everything, and to follow as closely as possible the noble and blessed example of his dear Lord and Saviour, not seeking his own pleasure or advancement, but endeavoring by a life of stern self-sacrifice to do all the good in his power to the souls and bodies of those over whom he had control, or was able in any way to influence. Above all things he asked for boldness to be able bravely to confess his Lord when it was his duty to stand up for Him, never to be ashamed to own that he was a Christian, or to flinch before mockery or ridicule.

Foul weather confronted the "Curlew" as soon as she left Plymouth Sound; the wind, too, was contrary. It was a bad and ominous beginning for the young skipper. They

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could make no progress, and were tossed about for three days and nights in the Channel. A few of the men grumbled. In such dirty weather as this, with no signs of a change, any sensible captain would put back to Plymouth, they said. Martin took no notice of their suggestion, and issued his orders with as much firmness and confidence as if he had commanded the vessel for three years instead of three days. He soon perceived what sort of men he had to deal with, and that the discontented formed but a small minority. Had he put back to port the very same men would doubtless have accused him of cowardice or inexperience.

Squally weather and adverse winds accompanied them through the Bay of Biscay; it was not till after passing Gibraltar that they rejoiced in smooth seas and a bright sky.

On Sunday mornings the young captain read the Church Service in the cuddy, which most of the men attended. It was enlivened, too, by hearty hymn-singing, which Martin, having a good voice, well trained in the choir, was able to lead himself. Naturally enough he was nicknamed the "Psalm-singing skipper" by the few scoffers on board.

The voyage had not lasted much over a week when the men who were inclined to be insubordinate under so young a master found out that he was not a man to be trifled with. At the same time, though a strict disciplinarian who would not allow his commands to be disobeyed, he was kind, good-tempered, and considerate, — all agreed they had sailed under many a worse skipper, — so henceforth submitted without any further murmuring to his orders.

Martin's first voyage, therefore, ended under more favorable auspices than it had begun. His employers were thoroughly satisfied with his success and efficiency. They only regretted they had not a larger ship to offer him yet, so he sailed again in the "Curlew," this time to the ports of the North Sea and the Baltic.

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Thus in coasting voyages to the north and south, constantly gaining fresh experience, winning ever more and more the confidence of the ship-owners and the goodwill of the shipmates who sailed under him, rather more than a year had passed away. Money was being saved, young Captain Archer was now a fairly well-to-do man; there was no reason why he and Kate should not become man and wife.

Aunt Sarah, though much more amiable than in former days, raised repeated objections. How could she ever get on without Kate, plagued as she was with rheumatism! how cruel it would be of her niece to leave her to the tender mercies of a servant! Now that Kate's marriage with Martin seemed likely so soon to be an accomplished fact she began to regard the young captain with all her former prejudice and dislike. Kate's assurance that not a day would elapse after their marriage on which she would not come and see her, and that while Martin was at sea she could be with her almost as much as formerly, did not reassure the aggrieved spinster. Messrs. Willis & Dobbs had just offered Martin the command of his father's old ship the "Diana," with an increased salary. She was to sail to the West Indies and South America. The voyage would last six or eight months. Martin, who had several times given way to Kate's request to defer their union, owing to her aunt's ill-health and opposition, now urged her to promise to be his wife on his return from this cruise.

Kate, feeling she could not put Martin off any longer, consented: she told her aunt that same evening that she and Martin had quite settled to be married before the year was out, so she must make up her mind to lose her.

Her aunt wept and grumbled, repeating her old grievances against the whole of the sterner sex, and Martin in particular. But this time it was of no avail; Kate was firm, and Aunt Sarah was obliged to submit to the hard fate which was impending over her. She selfishly wished that

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Martin's voyage might be a very long one, or that some unforeseen event might occur to postpone a marriage to which she had always been so pertinaciously opposed.

Martin sailed, then, in the "Diana," and this time, to his no little satisfaction, his old friend Jack was among his crew. With a larger ship and company than before, and a longer and more difficult voyage in prospect, Martin felt his responsibilities greatly increased. But he was quite equal to the occasion; most of his men knew him, and the new hands soon learned that the young captain was not one who would put up with idleness or insubordination. One cause of regret to Martin was the discovery, which he made soon after sailing, that his friend Jack had, since their separation, fallen into worse habits, and by no means kept his good resolutions. However, he was as faithful and devoted to Martin as ever; even if the captain had to speak sharply to him he never resented it. This good point in his character encouraged Martin to hope that he might in other and more important matters be brought to a better mind.

The voyage was uneventful. The "Diana" experienced the usual vicissitudes of weather, — dead calms and moderate gales. It was just eight months after her departure when she anchored again in Plymouth Sound.

Kate had heard several times from Martin during his absence. His letters had been no little comfort to her, Aunt Sarah having been more than usually irritable and discontented. Old Mrs. Archer, too, was ailing, and required much attention. Kate spent all the time she could spare at her side, her presence tending much to cheer and comfort her. At this her aunt grumbled, for she had latterly become jealous of Mrs. Archer, asserting that Kate paid more attention to her than to herself. Added to this Kate had to endure the constant anxiety which all must feel who have any dear to them exposed to the perils of the deep, especially when the wind blew hard, and

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howled round the house, and she heard of great gales at sea, terrible shipwrecks, and sad loss of life. On these occasions she felt the greatest rest and peace when she could go to the church hard by, kneel alone and pray for Martin — for her poor brother, too, though she knew not whether she was praying for the living or the dead — and pour out her trials, sorrows, and anxieties into the sympathizing ear of Him who is touched with the feeling of our infirmities.

As weeks and months passed away, and the time approached for Martin's return, and for their marriage, which was to take place in three weeks after her lover reached Plymouth, her spirits rose in proportion, and she looked more confidently forward to the future.

However, three days before the "Diana" anchored in the Sound, Mrs. Archer's illness assumed a very alarming character. She was now confined to her bed, and the doctor, when asked what he thought of her case, gave her friends to understand there seemed to him but little hope of recovery.

Evil tidings therefore greeted Martin when he landed; he found his grandmother sadly changed, but the sight of him seemed at first to revive her strength and spirits. Her state was such that both Martin and Kate felt they could not have their banns published next Sunday, as they had intended. In less than a week after Martin's return she grew rapidly worse, but lingered on for ten days, and then, after giving her blessing to Martin and Kate, who knelt at her bedside, she peacefully and quietly passed away.

The death of his grandmother was a heavy blow to Martin; she was his only remaining near relation, and a link which bound him to the memory of a beloved father whose loss he never ceased to lament. She was laid to rest in the cemetery by her son's side.

On the evening of the day on which the funeral had taken place Martin and Kate stood by the grave. They felt

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they were dearer to each other than ever now; Martin's fresh loss had drawn his heart still closer to Kate, for she seemed almost his only friend in the world; she, too, had loved and cared for the deceased as tenderly as a daughter, and felt that a blank was left in her life. Her death, too, had cast a dark shadow over their prospects; the wedding could not, as had been arranged, take place just yet, but as Martin did not wish to defer it until after another voyage, he proposed remaining at Plymouth for some three or four months, and resigning for the present the command of the "Diana."

Martin was now the sole occupant of the house which his father had left him; it was melancholy, indeed for him, living quite alone, but he was cheered by the thought that it would not seem long before Kate came to share it. The next day he met Jack; he told him how he was situated, and offered him a home if he liked to come and live with him while he was ashore. Jack gladly accepted the invitation. Martin hoped to exercise a good influence over him, and to keep him out of mischief.

A couple of days after his grandmother's funeral, Martin was suddenly summoned to the office of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, who wished to speak with him at once on urgent business.

Mr. Willis welcomed the young captain with great cordiality, expressing his sympathy for his recent loss. "Sit down for a minute or two, Captain Archer," he said; "I want to ask you to help us in an emergency which has just come upon us. You know our fine barque, the 'Queen of the West,' just about to sail for Melbourne with a valuable cargo; well, a most unfortunate and unforeseen circumstance occurred last night. Captain Thomson, her master, one of our oldest and most experienced skippers, while superintending the storing of the cargo in the dock, fell down one of the hatchways, and was so seriously hurt he had at once to be taken to the hospital. Though we have good reason

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to hope he will ultimately recover, it will be months before he is fit to go to sea again; thus you see the 'Queen of the West' is left without a master. All our captains, with the exception of yourself, are at sea; our next in seniority, Captain Stevens, who, in proper course, would take the command of the barque, won't be back for at least a month; therefore, we have no one to fall back upon but you; will you, therefore, take the command of the 'Queen of the West,' and be ready to sail early next week?"

Martin colored and did not reply for some moments. He was terribly perplexed; this offer implied the greatest confidence on the part of the firm, and was a compliment to his skill and good character which could not be otherwise than flattering to so young a man. But, on the other hand, it involved a responsibility to which he hardly felt himself equal, and, above all, it would again cause his marriage to be deferred. What would Kate say to it? He felt he could not decide without asking her. He must have a little time for consideration.

"It is very kind of you, sir," he replied, "to place so much confidence in me, and to offer me the 'Queen of the West,' but surely I'm too young to be master of so large a ship; I shall have officers under me older than myself, to say nothing of the crew; I've never commanded a ship for Australia, though I've sailed there as first mate once or twice; is there no one else to whom you can intrust the command?"

"We don't find your youth any obstacle, captain," was the reply; "you've proved yourself to be as steady and skilful a master as we have in our employ, and as you've maintained discipline very well in a small ship you'll doubtless be able to do so in a large one. Remember, we're asking it of you as a favor; by taking command of the 'Queen of the West' you'll be relieving us of a great difficulty. If you refuse, we shall be sadly put to it to know what to do."

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"Well, sir," replied Martin, "I must ask you for a little time to think the matter over; I cannot decide, either, without consulting others; it has come upon me so sudden-like I hardly know what to say. In fact, sir, I was about to ask you to give me a three months' furlough, because I am going to be married shortly, so the acceptance of your proposal must make a change in all my plans. Will you, then, give me till to-morrow morning to decide, sir?"

"Willingly, Captain Archer; nothing could be more reasonable than your request. I am very sorry that this offer of ours should involve the postponement of your marriage. However, I promise you a long furlough on your return, and remember, too, that promotion brings increase of pay, which will help you to set up housekeeping."

"You are very kind, sir," replied Martin; "I will take all you say into consideration, and I'm sure I'm proud of the confidence you place in me. I wish you good-morning till this time to-morrow, sir, when I promise you I shall have decided one way or the other."

"Good morning, captain," said Mr. Willis, as he shook him warmly by the hand; "I only trust the decision will be in our favor."

Immersed in deep thought and full of perplexity, Martin walked slowly home. He met Jack at the door; he told him at once the offer which had been made him.

"What! you offered the 'Queen of the West,' captain — the biggest ship in Willis & Dobbs' fleet, and you a-putting on a long face and a-hesitating whether you'll take it or not; why? I'd jump at it in a minute."

"I don't feel up to commanding such a big ship, Jack; moreover, you know I didn't mean to go to sea just now — leastways, not till after my marriage."

"Ay, captain. Yes, that puts the affair in a different light, certainly. Neither you nor the girl will like to wait any longer. I didn't think of that — she's sure to take on terribly, if she thinks you're a-going on that long voyage

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instead of being married to her. I expect you'll have to give it up. I'm sorry, too, for I've no doubt you'd have got me a berth along with you in that big ship."

"Well, Jack," replied Martin, "I hope Kate and I'll do what we feel to be our duty, even if we have to make a sacrifice, and put off our wedding. I'm going to talk it over with her now, and to-morrow morning I must let Messrs. Willis & Dobbs' know for certain what I mean to do."

"And if you settle to take the 'Queen of the West,' you won't forget your old shipmate, Jack Adams, captain."

"That I won't, Jack. I sha'n't sail in her unless I've secured you a berth on board."

"That's right, master," said Jack, "thank you"; and they parted.

On his way to seek for Kate, Martin passed St. Michael's Church, the doors of which were always open, inviting any passers-by who were weary, heavy laden, afflicted, or in perplexity to enter and pour out their troubles to God in His sanctuary; and, undisturbed by the turmoil of the world around them, to seek for counsel and strength. Martin entered the sacred building; not a soul was there, — a hallowed silence reigned through the church; he knelt down and prayed most earnestly to his Father in Heaven to guide and direct him in the decision which he must now make. He told Him how sincerely he wished to do his duty — not to seek his own will or pleasure, but God's; to deny himself, and make any sacrifice, however painful, if it were only made plain to him that by so doing he was acting as his heavenly Father willed.

He had just risen from his knees, comforted and strengthened, when he saw Mr. Newberry pass through the church to the vestry; he followed him and asked if he might have a few words with him. Martin told him about his recent interview with Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, how perplexed he was to know what course to take; his employers were

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evidently in a difficulty, and would be seriously inconvenienced if he declined; this offer, too, was a proof of their confidence, which would make it all the more ungracious were he to decline. On the other hand, his marriage would have to be postponed for perhaps another year, at which he felt sure Kate would be as greatly disappointed as he was himself.

Mr. Newberry fully sympathized with his young friend; he perceived at once how great was the difficulty and how hard it was for him to decide.

"You have, I perceive, Martin," he said, "been seeking counsel where alone true counsel is to be found. I feel sure that He will guide you right: 'What man is he that feareth the Lord? him shall He teach in the way that he shall choose'; that way may not perhaps, after you have taken it, seem smooth and right. You may sometimes even say, 'Oh, would I had taken the other'; but if you have really, humbly and sincerely sought the Lord's guidance to order your steps according to His word, be not discouraged, for, as the hymn says,

> 'All is right that seems most wrong,
> If it be His sweet will.'"

"Yes, sir," replied Martin, "I can truly say I have submitted my own will and pleasure to God, and am ready to act as He desires me; but if I accept Messrs. Willis & Dobbs' proposal, I feel the responsibility of such a charge will weigh heavily upon me."

"Doubtless it is a post of great responsibility for one so young as you are, Martin; but if your conscience tells you that it is plainly your duty to accept it, God will give you strength to bear it: 'Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He shall sustain thee.' I shall be very sorry that your marriage should be deferred; but you are both young, my friend; Kate is very useful to her poor aunt,—*she* will not regret her remaining with her a year longer."

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"No, sir," said Martin, with a sad smile, "'it's an ill wind that blows nobody any good'; *she'll* be glad enough, but I mean to leave it pretty much to Kate to decide. She's quite as great a sense of duty as I have; I know she won't put her own will and pleasure before doing what's right. I'm going to consult with her now, and I mean to give her till this evening to think the matter over."

"Quite right, Martin; I feel as great confidence in Kate's good judgment as you do," said Mr. Newberry; "she, as you have done, will certainly ask to be guided by the Lord, and to both of you may the words be fulfilled: 'He shall guide me with His counsel, and afterwards receive me to glory'; and now good-by, Martin, and may God be with you."

Martin found Kate at home. The look of anxiety on his face betrayed to her at once that something was wrong.

"What is the matter, Martin?" she exclaimed; "how sad you look this morning!"

"Nothing is the matter, Kate," he replied, "I am only much perplexed to know what to do, and how to decide for the best"; and then he told her of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs' proposal and of all it involved.

Kate listened in silence, but her countenance indicated plainly enough how truly she shared her lover's feeling, and how deeply she sympathized with him.

"And you have seen Mr. Newberry, Martin," she said. "What advice did he give you?"

"Well, from all I could gather he seemed to think I ought to accept the offer, but he said I'd best be guided by what you thought about it."

"Well, it's a sore trial, Martin," she replied. "I confess it seems hard that we should again have to put off the wedding, and that I must lose you so soon, when I had been looking forward to having you here for three months, at least; but we must do our duty before inclination, and

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sacrifice our own pleasure to do what is plainly right. It strikes me that it is your duty to go, Martin, — that you'd be both wanting in courage and in gratitude to Messrs. Willis & Dobbs for all their kindness and consideration to you and your father if you refused to command that ship, and thus put them to trouble and inconvenience, as it clearly would do. Then, too, with all our regrets, one can't help feeling proud of the confidence they place in you at your age. Still, of course, I'm sorry and disappointed" — here her voice was choked by the tears she had hitherto with difficulty suppressed.

"It is hard, there's no doubt of it," he said, as he took her hand; "but what you have said only confirms me in my opinion that it is my duty to accept the offer, Kate. God knows I wish earnestly to do what's right; and I've prayed Him to guide me to see His will, and to act as He would have me. Your words, Mr. Newberry's advice, all tend in the same direction. Yes, Kate, it seems plainer and plainer to me that I must go, and take a long farewell of you next week."

"You believe me, Martin, I'm sure," said Kate, through her tears, "that I am speaking quite contrary to my own feelings and inclinations. Would to God I could say conscientiously, 'It is your duty Martin, to stay,' but I can't — alas!"

"Well, cheer up, Kate," said Martin, tenderly, "this has only made you dearer to me than ever; a year will soon be over, and, as Mr. Newberry said, we are both very young yet. This voyage will bring in a considerable increase of pay, which will come in nicely to help us to furnish; then I'll let my house for the time I'm away, and make something more by that, too."

"It will be a long year to me, Martin, dear," replied Kate. "I shall feel more anxious than ever, knowing what a heavy and responsible charge you'll have. I hope some of your old crew will be with you."

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"I fear not, Kate; that 'll be an additional trial. But Jack Adams is to go; I shall stipulate for that."

"That's a comfort, for he's the most faithful friend you have. I shall never forget his kindness to you at Margate; rough fellow that he is, he has a thoroughly good heart. Aunt Sarah won't be sorry to hear this news, Martin, — it's a good thing that some one should be pleased," said Kate, with a sigh.

They talked the matter over for a long time. When Martin left to return home his mind was quite made up: he had decided to accept the ship-owners' offer, and to become the master of the "Queen of the West."

When Jack came in to supper he told him his decision, and that he would arrange to-morrow with Willis & Dobbs for him to be one of his crew. Jack was of course delighted,— his spirits were as high in the prospect of the voyage as Martin's were depressed.

At the appointed hour next morning Martin appeared at the office, and at once announced his decision to Mr. Willis, who thanked the young captain warmly for acceding to their request; he had got them out of a troublesome dilemma as well as saved them a considerable sum which might have been lost had the departure of the ship been long delayed; now she could sail on the appointed day. Martin's request about Jack was granted at once, and Robinson, who as second mate in the "Star of Devon," had been shipwrecked with him on that terrible night off Margate, was to be appointed chief officer of the "Queen of the West," at which Martin was much satisfied, and expressed warm thanks to the principal.

He had now but little time for making his final arrangements. He succeeded, however, in finding a good tenant for his house. He had a long interview with his friend the parson, who assured him that he had acted for the best in choosing the thorny path of duty in preference to the more enticing one of inclination. In all the trials and difficul-

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ties which might be in store for him his heavenly Father would be with him to guide and protect him. He trusted, however, and prayed that the voyage might be a safe and prosperous one, and that no greater obstacles or hindrances would occur than on his previous cruises. On the Sunday before he sailed Martin and Kate knelt together before the altar in the beloved church to receive the Holy Communion. Both were thinking how long it would be before they again would together observe that solemn ordinance.

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CHAPTER XIX.

LOOMING TROUBLES.

"His barque will fade in mist and night
Across the dim sea line,
And coldly in our aching sight
The solemn stars will shine;
All, all in mournful silence, save
For ocean's distant roar —
Heard where the slow regretful wave
Sobs on the lonely shore."

WITH gloomy feelings and with a presentiment of coming troubles, which he did his best to repress, Martin took a hasty and affectionate farewell of Kate, hurried down to the Barbican and jumped into the boat which was to take him on board his fine new ship, anchored in the Sound. The length of the voyage, increased in point of time by the numerous ports at which they had to call, the size of the vessel, the number of her crew, the value of the cargo, and the responsibility he incurred, all weighed heavily on Martin's mind. He was buoyed up by the conviction that, though he had chosen a course decidedly contrary to his inclination, he was doing his duty, and acting according to the dictates of his conscience.

Favored by fine weather and a fair wind the "Queen of the West" sailed out of the Sound and proceeded rapidly down the Channel. Martin soon found out the many good qualities of his new ship. He had never sailed in a finer, and felt proud indeed that he should have been appointed her master. The crew, he was not long in discovering, were a very mixed set. He felt thankful that he was so

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well supported in his first mate, and that his friend Jack was with him. The second mate was a surly, ill-conditioned fellow, named Simpson. He was vexed from the first at having so young a man as Martin Archer placed over him, and regarded him with jealousy and dislike. He hated religion, and cursed his stars that he should be forced to sail under a psalm-singing captain. He always gave Martin the shortest and gruffest answers, and executed his orders reluctantly and with an ill grace. He soon made for himself a strong party among the crew, for in every body of men there are sure to be found some given to discontent and ready to set authority at defiance. Martin very soon found it necessary to prove that though young he would be master in his ship, maintain discipline, and exact obedience from every man on board. Simpson revenged himself on the captain by scoffing at religion, using bad language in his presence, refusing to come to service on Sunday, laughing at and annoying those who did. Martin, distressed at his conduct, tried kindness and persuasion to bring him to a better mind, but all his endeavors were of no avail. The second mate seemed determined to remain the captain's inveterate foe.

Simpson was formidable only by virtue of his position, which enabled him to become the head of a faction on board ready to thwart the captain or to set his authority at defiance whenever it were possible. As it was very rarely in his power to injure the skipper, Simpson showed his spite against him by annoying the steadiest and quietest among the crew who were known to be his special friends. There happened to be on board a lad named Charley Barry, a *protégé* of Captain Archer's. Martin, who taught regularly in Mr. Newberry's Sunday-school when on shore, had first noticed the boy in his class, and finding he had a liking for the sea, that he was sharp, active and steady, had recommended him to Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, and got him a berth on board the "Queen of the West." Charley had

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been for rather more than a year in the choir at St. Michael's Church. He had a decidedly musical talent, not only possessing a good voice, but able also to play a few simple tunes on the harmonium. His mother, a widow, was deeply grateful to Martin for the notice he had taken of her son, and for giving him such a good start in life. The boy was cheerful and high-spirited; he had always had a longing for the sea, and sailed on this his first voyage, full of the brightest hopes and expectations. But in a very few days some of his cherished illusions were dissipated, and he found that a life on board ship is not one of such unmixed enjoyment as he had pictured it at home. He had a great deal to learn, and it was hard work at first; for though the captain was kind he was very strict, and required obedience to the letter. But Charley suffered most from the tyranny and petty persecutions of the second mate, in whose watch unfortunately he was, Simpson having soon found out that he was a favorite of the captain, and that any harshness to Charley would annoy the skipper.

The boy, who had never been on board ship before, was quite fresh at his work, and naturally made many blunders at first. But no act of awkwardness or ignorance escaped Simpson; the most trivial and natural error brought down scoffs, and oaths, and sometimes even blows — if the captain was out of the way — on the poor boy, who became the butt of the second mate and of his chums among the crew.

Charley was too brave and high-spirited to complain — he endured his troubles in silence, and was always cheered when the captain said a kind word to him. But they had not been much more than a week at sea before Martin noticed that the boy looked worn and unhappy; he was rather surprised at this, but put it down to the change of life and to the somewhat hard work to which he was unaccustomed. One evening, perceiving Charley gazing down

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sadly over the bulwarks, he went up to him and touched him on the shoulder, saying kindly —

"Well, Charley, my lad, how are you getting on? You've looked very down in the mouth the last few days. I'm afraid you don't find life on board ship so pleasant as you expected?"

"O yes, thank you, sir, I'm getting on very well," said Charley, brightening up at once; "when I get more used to my work, and don't keep making such a lot of stupid blunders, I shall get on pretty well, I hope."

"We've all got to learn our duties, my boy; there must be a beginning for every one, and no one's to be blamed if they don't do all quite right at first," said the captain, kindly. "And now, Charley, as you don't seem to have anything to do just now, come into my cabin for half an hour. I brought out an old harmonium with me, — I knew you could play some tunes on it, and I thought it would be pleasant to hear some of our favorite hymns that we sing in the St. Michael's choir, and to use it, too, for our service on Sundays, — so come along and try it."

The lad followed the captain into his cabin, which in so large a ship as the "Queen of the West" was a very comfortable one; opposite the berth stood a harmonium; above it was a small book-shelf with two rows of books. On the sides hung some photographs, the most conspicuous of which were portraits of Kate and Martin's father.

The captain took down from the shelf a copy of Hymns, Ancient and Modern, with the tunes; he looked out some of the easiest and most familiar ones, and then Charley sat down at the harmonium and played them over several times till, encouraged by the success of his efforts, the boy began to sing the hymns, and the captain naturally enough joined in.

Charley forgot his troubles, for he was not only cheered by the captain's kindness, but by the sweet and familiar sounds which he drew from the instrument.

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"Well, that'll do now, Charley," said the captain, closing the harmonium. "On Sunday if all's well we'll have some hymns at our service, and you shall play for us. Good-night, my boy, and keep up your spirits."

Simpson was sitting in the forecastle with a knot of his friends. Suddenly he exclaimed —

"Bless me, lads! what's that noise I hear? some sort of music, sure enough; it sounds as if it came from the captain's cabin. Is he given to fiddling, do ye know? It ain't likely, surely, he's going to give us a dance?" His last remark was received with a loud laugh.

"He's no ways musical," said one of the men; "though he's given to psalm-singing, as you know well enough yourself, Mr. Simpson."

"Ah! that I do, Jim, to my cost," remarked the second mate. "Who'll go and listen and bring us word?"

"I'll go," said one of the boys, the greatest scamp on board the ship.

"That's right, George, there's a good fellow; be quick about it," said Simpson.

George left the group at the forecastle, crept softly along the deck, and reached the door of the captain's cabin. Here, to his no little surprise, he heard not only the notes of the harmonium, but the voices of the captain and Charley Barry joining in singing Bishop Ken's well-known evening hymn. He perceived that the curtain was not quite drawn across the little window, so he very cautiously looked in; there he saw Charley sitting at the harmonium, and the captain standing over him.

This was quite enough; he scampered off at once back to his companions. He was laughing so he could scarcely get out his words.

"Well, George, what did you see?" said Simpson. "Fine fun, I'm sure, to make you giggle so!"

"Ah, ah!" he cried. "Why, Mr. Simpson, what do you think now — the captain's got a pianny in his cabin,

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and there's Charley Barry, whom you call the milksop and the landlubber, a-playing away on it, just like a school-gal, and the captain's a-singing hymns, and Charley, too!"

"A nice sort of skipper to command a ship, indeed!" said Simpson. "I wonder what we'll come to next."

This incident caused the men immense amusement; for the next half hour they talked of nothing else, laughing and making fun of the captain and his piano.

When the group broke up, Simpson, feeling more maliciously disposed than ever towards Charley, kept a sharp lookout for his victim. It was Charley's duty to keep the decks clean; Simpson longed to find some dirt about, that he might have cause to blame him. Unluckily it happened that while Charley was with the captain, the cook, who had been cleaning up, and passing backwards and forwards with his ashes and rubbish, had spilled some on the deck; Charley perceiving this immediately he came out from the captain's cabin went to fetch a mop to clean it up. But Simpson was too sharp for him.

"Come here, you lazy young rascal," he cried in a towering passion. "Where have you been all this time? What do you mean leaving the decks in this filthy state?"

"I was just coming to wipe it up, sir," said Charley, who had the mop in one hand and a pail of water in the other.

"Just coming!" said Simpson, and he swore a fearful oath; "only because you saw me on the lookout! why wasn't it done before? I should like to know what you've been after all this time?"

Charley made no reply, but proceeded quietly with his mop to clean up the deck.

"Why don't you answer, you impudent youngster?" swore Simpson.

"It's not much more than half an hour ago that I was here a-sweeping up, sir," he said, "and there weren't none of this mess here then."

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"That's no answer to my question, young scoundrel. I say, what have you been doing for the last half-hour?"

Charley did not want to tell his enemy how he had been employed; he knew how Simpson hated the captain, and how he would scoff and make fun of them both if he let out about the harmonium.

"I was busy somewhere else, sir, — I could not come before," he replied.

"I'll teach you how to speak properly to your superior officers, and to answer questions when you're asked them; none of your cheek to me, young vagabond — you'll see I'll not put up with it," and he began forthwith to cuff Charley on the head unmercifully, calling out at the same time, "now answer me — what have you been up to the last hour?"

"Mr. Simpson, sir, Mr. Simpson," said a gruff voice behind him, "don't be so rough with that poor lad, — what's he been doing to deserve such a thrashing?"

Simpson turned round and said angrily, "It's no affair of yours, Jack Adams; he's disobeyed my orders, and I'm correcting him, as he deserves; just go and mind your own business — I'm second officer on board this ship, remember."

"I'm quite aware of it, Mr. Simpson, and so I am that you're neither the first officer nor the captain; and unless you leave that boy alone I'll just go and appeal to one or other of them; whatever he's done you've thrashed him enough already, so you'd better leave off now."

Simpson was furious; he was not a little surprised at this interference on Jack's part — he had seen nothing as yet to indicate that he was one of the captain's particular friends; so far during the voyage Jack had been distinguished by his strength and good spirits, though he had occasionally shown signs of a hasty temper.

"I'm not going to put up with any impertinence or interference from an inferior like you, Jack Adams; as long as

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I'm an officer on board this ship I'll be obeyed by those beneath me," he said with an oath.

"And I," swore Jack in reply, "won't see cruelty or injustice done by any one, whether he's my superior or not," and seizing the boy, whose head was bleeding from Simpson's blows, he placed himself between him and his assailant in a defiant attitude. Simpson, who, like all bullies, was a coward too, and who was no match for Jack, perceived that in this case discretion was the best part of valor, so he turned away, muttering with a look of malice and fury,

"You'll hear more of this another time, Jack Adams — I sha'n't forget it."

"Nobody wants you to, Mr. Simpson," said Jack, in a jeering tone.

Jack took an early opportunity of informing the captain of this incident. "It's not by any means the first time, captain, that I've found that fellow Simpson a-cuffing and a-kicking of that poor boy; he seems to have quite a spite against him; the lad's harmless enough, and seems to me willing to do his work."

"I'll keep a lookout on Simpson, Jack," replied Martin; "unfortunately Charley is under him, and unless he shows any gross injustice or unnecessary severity I can't well interfere. I know how heartily Simpson hates me — he has seen probably that I like and notice the boy, which would be quite enough reason for him to treat him unkindly."

"I expect, after what occurred last night, he'll have a spite against me too, captain," said Jack, — "not that I'm afraid of him."

When Sunday came, Martin determined to carry out his intention of using the harmonium for service. It was a fine calm day, they were far out in the wide ocean, quite out of sight of land; the captain felt that nothing added more to the brightness and heartiness of a service than the singing of well-known hymns; several of the men had good

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voices, and Charley could play sufficiently well to accompany them. He had asked some of the crew the previous evening what they thought about it: they had expressed themselves pleased with the idea; accordingly the harmonium was removed from the captain's cabin and placed on the main deck against the mast. Simpson, who had got wind of this plan, kept Charley hard at work till the very last moment before the hour for service; then he had to go and clean himself, and of course kept the captain and the rest waiting. Simpson and his friends, who refused to attend, lounged about the forecastle amusing themselves by scoffing and ridiculing what was going on. Martin read the prayers as devoutly and feelingly as was his wont, the men answering loudly and distinctly in the responses and the Psalms. The hymns went off very well; those most familiar to all had been chosen, such as "Rock of Ages," "O God, our help in ages past," and "Thy will be done." Several of the crew said they had never enjoyed a service at sea so much before, and when they were about to move the harmonium back to the captain's cabin, Robinson suggested that they should let it be for the present, and asked the captain whether they could not have an evening service, if it held on as fine as it was now. Martin said he should only be too glad. Jack, who was always pleased with anything new, remarked, that "with such a good parson as the captain, and such a fine horganist as Charley, it was as good as being in church on shore." Accordingly in the evening the captain read one of the Psalms, the second lesson, and a few of the prayers, after which a succession of hymns were sung, each man suggesting his favorite.

When they had finished, and the men went off to their several duties, they were greeted with jeers and laughter from their mates in the forecastle.

"You're turning this here ship into a Methodist Chapel," said Simpson; "catch me sailing with this fool of a captain again; he was cut out for a minister more than for a

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sailor; we shall come to grief before we get to Melbourne, I bet."

"It's no affair of yours, Simpson," said the chief mate. "If we choose to have a service it's our own lookout We don't interfere with you — only more shame on you for not attending it. Perhaps you'll be sorry some day you didn't."

"I'm surprised at a sensible man like you, Robinson, favoring the captain in all his silly fancies," replied Simpson. "I thought you were more of a man."

"I've known our captain much longer than you have, Simpson; he may be young, but he well deserves his post. There isn't a braver man on the seas, or a better-hearted one, either; and though I don't set up for being over religious, I shall stick to Captain Archer through everything," replied Robinson.

"Very well, Mr. Robinson, keep your opinion, and I'll keep mine," said Simpson; "but I know this, that your friend the captain might as well have brought a school-gal on board the ship as that boy Charley Barry — a lazy young scamp, fit for nothing but to play piannies — and I suppose that's what he took him for. What do we want with such things aboard ship, I should like to know!"

"As far as I can judge the boy's steady and willing enough, Simpson; I never see him shirk his work; and he's strong and active, too, for his age," said the chief mate.

"Mr. Simpson says that only because he don't like the boy," remarked Jack, who had been standing by listening to the conversation; "and the reason he don't like him is because the captain's fond of him. The blows and kicks he gives to Charley he'd aim at the captain if he dared."

Simpson cast a look of concentrated hate and malice at Jack, and turned away.

The chief mate said severely, "Come, Jack Adams, you forget yourself. Don't speak in that way to your superiors. I shall have to report you to the captain if I hear such

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language again. Remember Mr. Simpson is second officer on board this ship."

"He's not likely to let any of us forget that, sir, and you know as well as I do it 's all true what I said," muttered Jack as he turned away.

Although the voyage was on the whole a fine one, few gales being encountered, and no particular difficulties, Martin found his position far harder than ever before. It was not only that he had a larger ship to look after, and a more numerous company, but he had to grapple with a considerable amount of insubordination among the men, which was rendered all the more formidable because it was headed and fostered by one of his officers. He tried every means to conciliate Simpson — spoke to him privately in the kindest way, remonstrated with him on his conduct, assuring him how willing he was to be friends with him, and how gladly he would make any sacrifice in his power that they might be on good terms, but all to no avail. His advances were only met by a surly response. The kinder Martin was to him the more did Simpson despise him. He was possessed by the demon of jealousy.

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CHAPTER XX.

TRIALS AND DIFFICULTIES.

"Labor with what zeal we will,
Something still remains undone,
Something uncompleted still
Waits the rising of the sun.

. . . . .

Till at length the burden seems
Greater than our strength can bear,
Heavy as the weight of dreams
Pressing on us everywhere."

— LONGFELLOW.

WHEN the "Queen of the West" reached Rio, the port at which she was first to call, the difficulties of her captain increased. Some of the men went on shore and returned so drunk that they were incapacitated for their duties. Two of them, after being severely reprimanded by the captain, deserted. Simpson himself, when the worse for liquor, spoke so insolently to Martin that even he lost his temper — told him he had made up his mind he would no longer put up with such insults, and that the next time he addressed him in such a way he would punish him as if he were a common sailor. The second mate was cowed for the moment, but his rancor and hatred towards the master was, though kept under for a time, rendered the more bitter and intense. He never lost an opportunity of stirring up ill feeling among the crew. He invented a number of false stories relating to the captain's previous career, which were so plausible that a few even of the better sort among the men were led to believe them, and thus became alienated from the skipper, whom they had previously

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liked. Simpson's most formidable opponent was Jack Adams. He contradicted his false statements to his face, and did his best to prove to the crew that the second mate was a downright liar, who invented all these stories to satisfy a grudge he had against the captain.

At each port where they touched Martin had fresh troubles and annoyances, Simpson being at the bottom of them all. At last, after a long consultation with the first mate, he decided that unless matters improved he would, on arriving at Melbourne, telegraph to the ship-owners, requesting them either to give him power to dismiss the second mate or to release him from his command.

When at last they reached their destination Martin was worn out with worry, anxiety, and the weight of his responsibility. Hard work here awaited him, and he was at once met by a fresh and unexpected trial.

The city of Melbourne was in a great state of excitement. A new gold-field had just been discovered some hundreds of miles in the interior of the country. All classes were seized with the fever of gain. There was a perfect exodus from the town; some in wagons, others on horse or mule-back, but the majority on foot, were pouring in a continuous stream out of the city in the direction of the gold-mines. Contracts and promises were no longer considered binding. Apprentices left their shops, workmen forsook employments at which they were earning excellent wages; men who had already established themselves in trade or business and were making a comfortable livelihood abandoned their homes, and even merchants in easy circumstances were in many instances infected by the universal thirst for gain, and joined in that race for wealth which, while it brought affluence to the few, plunged the many in ruin and tribulation. The vilest passions were excited; the dregs of a population composed of the scum of Europe, by force of numbers, unrestrained by authority, for a time held an unbridled sway over the more quiet

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and respectable of the diggers; those whom they could not corrupt they plundered and murdered. Might prevailed over right; his life was safest who had the least success in the gold-fields; the nugget once gained, woe to its possessor if he let his secret be known, for from the moment that he became its owner his life was in deadly peril from the daggers or revolvers of his companions!

No sooner did a ship anchor in the port of Melbourne than the majority of her crew, learning at once that riches were so easily within their grasp, regardless of all articles and engagements, deserted at once and made off to the diggings, where many of them, instead of the gold they sought, found an untimely grave. Business was almost at a stand-still on the wharves, for there were no hands either to lade or unlade the ships in the port. The few steady and conscientious men who honestly kept their engagements and stuck to their duty were terribly overworked — many of them falling ill in consequence. Riots were of frequent occurrence in the town, as every now and then a gang of diggers, who had been lucky enough to find nuggets and bring them back in safety, celebrated their success by drunken carouses, which always ended either in a quarrel among themselves or in a dispute with the authorities.

Such, then, was the condition of affairs when the "Queen of the West" anchored in the harbor of Melbourne. The agent of the ship-owners, who was on the lookout for the arrival of the vessel, immediately boarded her, and shutting himself up with the captain in his cabin informed him of the state of the city, enjoining him to keep a strict watch over his men, and to do all in his power to prevent them from deserting.

"Increase of pay," he said, "must at once be offered to induce them to remain. There is a large cargo to be landed; an equally large one ready to be shipped. Time is of importance, — everything, therefore, must be done to keep the crew together."

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Martin, only too well acquainted with the character of the hands on board his ship, foresaw fresh troubles in store. His trials and cares were not to end with his arrival at port, but rather to increase. He nerved himself to meet the difficulty, determined to do his best, and be faithful in everything to his employers. He called the first mate to him at once and told him what he had heard, asking him to assist him in keeping the men together. Robinson fully shared the captain's opinion; he was a thoroughly honest man, — moreover he was devoted to Martin, their intimacy having ripened into a deep friendship.

"Trust me, captain," he said, "for doing all I can to help you in this fix. We'll stick to each other through thick and thin, and I can answer for several of the hands doing their duty and keeping to their ship and their skipper."

"Yes, Robinson," said Martin, "but I'm afraid there won't be many; the steadiest will no doubt bide with us, the wild ones 'll be off at once, and they'll persuade some of the men who are quiet enough when left to themselves, but easily influenced by others, to join them."

"What 'll our second mate do, do you think, captain?"

"He 'll go, I should think, and I can't say he'd be any great loss; still one hardly knows what he's likely to do. By deserting he 'll lose all chance of promotion, remember, and his character will be gone, too; perhaps he won't risk it."

"My opinion is," said Robinson, "that he won't go; he's too cute to lose his berth and his character on a mere chance of getting rich; but we shall see very soon, captain."

"As one of the officers of the ship I must take him into our confidence," said Martin, "and tell him of the state of affairs. I shall take it as a matter of course that he, as second mate, won't think of deserting, and only ask him to use his influence to keep the crew together."

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"Yes, that'll be the right thing to do, captain," replied the first mate.

Martin summoned Simpson at once to his cabin. He was surly as usual. When Martin asked him to do his best to prevent the men from running off to the diggings he replied that he was quite aware of his duty to his employers, and that he would take good care that none of the men in his watch should desert the ship.

The news had taken him by surprise. His first thought was what profit he could make out of it for himself, and the next, how it would help him to revenge himself upon the captain. He sat down in the forecastle, lighted his pipe, and meditated. A happy idea struck him as he watched the men passing to and fro on the deck at their work.

"Jim," he said to one of his friends, "come here a minute, — I've got a piece of news for you, which I've just heard from the captain, who has taken me into his confidence, — strange to say."

"What is it, sir?" asked the man eagerly.

"Such a lot of gold has been found not far off from this here place that it's to be had for the trouble of picking it off the ground. Everybody's off to the gold-fields; no sooner does a ship's crew get on shore than they take to their heels and join the rest; fortunes are to be made in no time. All the wharf laborers are gone, and there's no one left to unload the ship. The captain's determined that none of you shall desert; he's asked me to help him; your pay's to be doubled if you stay; he'll prevent your going on shore if he can; he's quite desperate about it."

"We'll see about that, sir," replied the sailor; "he don't suppose us chaps is going to stick on board this ship a-toiling and a-working under such a captain as he, even for double pay, when we can all make our fortunes without trouble in two or three days; he won't prevent *me* from going to the gold-fields, I can tell you."

"A pretty plight our friend the captain 'll be left in if

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most of his crew forsake him; that'll soon bring all his boasting to an end; he has already been quite polite to me this morning, because he finds he can't do without my help," said Simpson, bitterly, "if it's all true what I've just heard he may have to stay here a year or more before he finds hands to man his ship."

"Ha! ha, Mr. Simpson, I see plainly enough you're not going to do anything to hinder us going off," said Jim, with a leer.

"I've not expressed any opinion on the subject, Jim," said the second mate, "but here comes Robinson, — go on with your work."

The exciting news about the discovery of gold flew like wildfire through the ship. All the men were longing to get on shore to hear more about it, — most of them were bent on making for the gold-fields as soon as they set foot on land.

Martin knew he had no power to imprison his crew on board all the time they were in port. The utmost he could do was to influence and persuade them. He appealed to the better feelings of the steadier among his men, but with the great temptation before them, and the example of such a multitude forsaking posts of emolument and high wages in order to make a speedy fortune, he could not help fearing lest he should lose the majority of his crew.

That afternoon the "Queen of the West" was moored alongside the quay for the purpose of unlading. Scarcely a wharf laborer was to be found, the very few who offered their services demanding exorbitant wages.

Martin told his men he expected them all to set to work early next morning to discharge the cargo; their pay was to be doubled, and promises of further reward were held out to those who remained faithful.

At night most of the men went on shore. In a low drinking saloon in the centre of the town a number of them were sitting at a table, glasses before them, pipes in their mouths.

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Simpson occupied a prominent place; he was treating his lads to a glass to make up to them for all the hard usage they had suffered on board the "Queen of the West" from their severe captain. The place was very full, the atmosphere hot and stifling from tobacco smoke and the fumes of liquor. Round most of the tables rough-looking men were sitting, who, having had a run of luck at the gold-fields, had returned to the city to enjoy a drunken spree, many of them in a few days getting rid of gold on which they might have lived comfortably for years; gambling at high stakes was going on everywhere, loud and angry words and coarse oaths arose on all sides.

A tall, stalwart young fellow with a fresh complexion and a thick, light beard, evidently a sailor, now entered the room. He stood for a moment at the door as if trying to discern through the smoke if any of his friends or acquaintances were present; he then made his way among the noisy groups up to the table where the crew of the Plymouth ship were sitting, but on perceiving Simpson he turned away, and was about taking his seat at another table, when Simpson called out in a friendly voice, "Come along, Jack Adams, — I'm standing treat here to a few of our chaps; you must come and join us, — we'll forget old scores now we're on shore again; come, shake hands and let's be friends."

Jack, amazed at this change in the second mate's behavior towards him, with the impulsiveness and good-nature of his disposition, shook hands, accepted the proffered hospitality, and took the place which his mates at once made for him at the table. Simpson ordered another glass of grog, Jack lighted his pipe, and soon became as merry and noisy as any of the party.

The conversation naturally turned almost entirely on the gold-fields. Most of the men made no secret of their intention to be off hither at dawn next day. Simpson at first pretended to oppose this resolve of the men; he said it

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was cowardly to forsake the ship, and break their engagements. He spoke of the penalties and punishments they would incur if captured, of the loss of character such desertion would involve, but he talked in a very half-hearted way, adding that it did seem a pity, when such an easy chance of making a fortune for life presented itself, to let it slip. It certainly was a temptation few could resist; he could hardly blame those who yielded to it.

"You'd better come along with us yourself, Mr. Simpson," said one of the men.

"No, no, Bill; I know my duty better," said the second mate, severely; "remember I'm an officer — you are only ordinary seamen."

"Yes, there's some truth in that," remarked another. "You'd play with higher stakes; and though you'd have more to lose, you wouldn't gain more than us, because we'd all be equal at the gold-fields."

"Not altogether, Jim," replied Simpson; "health and strength will have the best chance of getting the most nuggets, and of keeping them, too, when they're got. I should say our friend Jack Adams would be likeliest to make a fortune — quicker than most of you chaps."

"But you ain't a-going, Jack, are you?" asked one of his mates.

"I never thought of such a thing," he replied.

"You'd better then, Jack—you're just cut out for a miner. The strongest chap we have aboard, brave and daring as a lion, too."

"Ay! ay! that he is," echoed Simpson.

Flattery went down with Jack, who was proud, too, of his strength. The fiery drink was getting into his head; he was becoming dazzled with the golden prospects held out to him: wealth, every pleasure unlimited for a lifetime, all to be obtained by a few weeks' toil at these wonderful mines. He began to forget his duty to his employers, and his affection for his captain.

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Simpson, who was playing a deep game, saw his advantage. He took care that Jack was well supplied with drink.

"If most of us chaps go to these 'ere mines," remarked one of the men, "and there are no hands to be found to man our ship in Melbourne, I expect our captain 'll have to wait for us."

"There's little doubt of it," said Simpson. "In five or six weeks, lads, you'll all have made your fortunes, and be able to take your passage in the 'Queen of the West' back to Plymouth."

"All very well, Mr. Simpson, but when we get there he'll have us all up for desertion."

"If he's got no hands to man his ship you can make your own conditions with him first," replied the second mate.

"So we can, Mr. Simpson, — I never thought of that."

"Well, then," said another, "to-morrow morning we're all off for these mines: you'll join us, Jack, won't you?"

"Yes, yes, I'm your man," replied Jack, who was now quite under the influence of drink.

An hour later the men emerged from the saloon all more or less drunk, reeling through the street shouting and singing. Simpson, alone sober, was the only one who returned to sleep on board the ship. The rest turned into one of the many low lodging-houses which abound in the city. By daybreak a dozen or more of the crew were on their way to the gold-fields, Jack among the number.

It was with a chuckle of delight that Simpson perceived the captain's dismay when only three or four of the men turned up in the morning. That some had deserted he was not surprised, but two or three had left whom he thought would have remained faithful. Jack's defection caused him the deepest sorrow.

He inquired of Simpson if he had seen anything of the men the previous evening on shore. He replied that he

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had met a lot of them drunk in the street; they were very noisy and insolent, and refused to return on board. Jack Adams seemed to be the ringleader; he had shouted that they were all going off to the mines to make their fortunes next morning.

Martin, knowing that his second mate neither regarded the truth nor would lose any opportunity to annoy him, gave little credence to this story. That Jack was gone there was no doubt; he had been tempted by others and led astray. Martin felt it deeply; he had the sincerest affection for Jack; whatever might happen he never could forget his kindness and devotion to him. He felt, too, that when he was sober, and had reflected on his conduct, he would bitterly repent his desertion.

But the hard work he had before him gave him little time to brood over his troubles. The cargo must be unshipped with as little loss of time as possible. Very few laborers could be found, and they demanded exorbitant pay; the captain, however, had to engage them. He and his first mate worked as energetically as any of the men. The weather was terribly hot, and when the first day's work was over all felt worn out and exhausted.

"Thank you heartily, my lads," he said to the few men who had been faithful to him; "you shall be well rewarded for your conduct; I sha'n't forget how you've stuck to the ship and done your duty to-day."

On the third day after their arrival at Melbourne a fresh misfortune fell upon the captain. Robinson, his chief mate, while working like a common laborer on the quay, was smitten by a sunstroke, falling insensible to the ground. Martin and one of the crew carried him to his cabin, and as he showed no signs of reviving, a doctor was summoned; he said his state was very critical, and that he must at once be removed to the hospital. He added that if he got over it at all his recovery would be extremely slow.

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Thus Martin at one blow lost his right-hand man, his main prop and support in his peculiarly difficult position. Robinson was a man on whom he could thoroughly rely: he had been his father's friend, he had assisted him in every difficulty, in his judgment he had the greatest confidence. In the event, too, of Robinson not recovering before they had to sail for England he would be obliged to appoint Simpson to fill his place. Here was a sad lookout for the return voyage. With more power in his hands, and with very probably a rougher crew than before, Simpson would be intolerable.

Martin was thankful that the next day was Sunday; he would not only get the rest of body he so much needed, but a quiet time also to think over his troubles and seek help where it could alone be found. Accompanied by Charley Barry he went to an early service at a church he found not far from the port. He fervently prayed for strength to bear up under the anxieties and difficulties by which he was surrounded, and for Divine guidance that he might be led to act for the best in the perplexing situation in which he was placed; that God's way might be made plain before his face was his earnest prayer, and that he might have courage boldly to do his duty, however hard and unpleasant that duty might be.

He returned to the ship comforted and refreshed; he looked more confidently to the future. The God Whom he did his best to serve, the Father Whom he so deeply loved, and Who had so faithfully guarded and guided him hitherto, would not now forsake him in his hour of need.

From the morning and evening services of the church, from the quiet reading of God's word, and meditation in his cabin, he drew fresh sources of consolation. He wrote a long letter to Kate in the afternoon, telling her of the state of affairs at Melbourne, of the desertion of his crew, and how bitterly he felt Jack's being among their

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number. He saw nothing of Simpson all day — he had spent his time entirely on shore. Charley Barry was his only companion. The other five men were so exhausted that they remained the greater part of the day asleep in their bunks, though they all went with the captain to evening service, after which he went to the hospital to inquire after the chief mate; the answer was not cheering, — as yet he showed no signs of improvement.

On Monday morning they were hard at work again. Simpson, though he was surly as usual, took a fair share of the labor. Martin perceived that if he ever had any idea of deserting he had since Robinson's illness given it up. Promotion seemed to have sought him out — he was on the road to luck without going to the gold-mines. He chuckled at his good fortune; he was certain that the chief mate would never be well enough to resume his post, when the time came for them to sail to England.

The vessels which left Melbourne in these days of excitement were manned with very motley crews. Adventurers who had been unlucky at the gold-fields were glad enough to work their passage home; many of these were landsmen with no experience of the sea; but so great was the lack of hands that skippers and shipping agents were obliged to engage any men who were willing to serve, if they only seemed strong and healthy enough for the work.

As Martin now and then observed the ships leaving the port, and saw with what a set of ruffians many of them were manned, he looked forward with no little apprehension to what might be his own fate in a few weeks hence. They had already been a month at Melbourne, and under ordinary circumstances would now be on the point of sailing, but a large, heavy, and valuable cargo had to be shipped, and with the very few hands at their disposal this would be a long and wearisome business. Not one of the crew had returned. The captain had hoped that some, —

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Jack among the number,—might have repented of their folly and turned back before they reached the gold-fields. The instructions telegraphed to him from England were that he was to spare no expense to obtain laborers to ship the cargo, and when all was ready to get a crew together at any cost.

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CHAPTER XXI.

AT THE DIGGINGS

At length, impatient of the ship,
We reached the golden land.
. . . . .
And I went out to the wilderness,
With earnest heart and high,
To put my manhood to the test,
All danger to defy,
And gather store of the teeming
That all men deify.

Day by day I toiled and dug;
I was the veriest slave
Who ever sold himself to chains,
I wrought with fool and knave
With the self-same toil, for the self-same end.
. . . . .
One morn, apart and unobserved,
I roamed beyond the bound,
And saw a streak of glittering gold,
An inch above the ground.
I could not lift it with my hands;
I dug and none was near;
I scraped the earth with greedy haste,
In a pang of joy and fear."

—C. MACKAY.

IN a dreary, barren district, in the midst of a brown, arid plain, through which a turbid stream wound its way, might be seen a number of white tents and rude shanties. Though scattered everywhere about in that region they were gathered thickest by the banks of the stream, in and around which groups of men were busily employed — some digging desperately in the soil, others eagerly washing and

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sifting the sand they had procured, searching for the grains of gold they hoped to discover therein. It would be impossible to conceive a rougher or more uncouth set of men than these Australian gold-seekers. Convicts, outlaws, bandits were among them; here were collected the idle and dissolute of all countries; the thirst for gold, so innate in the heart of man, the desire to become rich without any great exertion, and in a very short space of time, had tempted thousands to forsake their posts and employment, and hurry to the gold-fields. Among these were a few steady, decent fellows, who having, not by any fault of their own, been unsuccessful in life, had, as a last resource, betaken themselves to the diggings. These frequently enough, by reason of their very honesty and simplicity, fell easy victims to the greed and rapacity of their unscrupulous companions.

It was evening: the sun had just set behind a range of barren mountains, and flooded the western sky with golden and crimson tints. But most of the men, heedless of the hour, continued to work on, for darkness alone put an end to their labor.

At a spot somewhat higher up the stream than where the crowd was thickest sat a man, his elbows resting on his knees, his head in his hands; as he watched his companions below he seemed immersed in deep thought. He was a young, strongly built man, with light hair and beard; his shirt open at the neck, and turned up at the sleeves above the elbows, displayed his strong, sinewy neck, and the iron muscles of his arms. He certainly would not be a foe that any one dare despise; at the same time his face was by no means an unamiable one, he might well be called a good-natured looking fellow.

After sitting some time motionless, he put his hand into one of his pockets, and took out his pipe, which he slowly lighted; then looking cautiously round to make sure that he was not observed he drew something from the other

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pocket which he proceeded very carefully to examine, saying to himself:—

"Well, so I've been lucky at last—who'd have thought it? Here I've been a-digging, and a-grubbing in the earth for the last three weeks, and only got a few grains of gold, just enough to pay for my board, when all of a sudden I light upon this lump and a little one like it. It's what they call a nugget, I've no doubt of it; why! how heavy it is—there ain't much earth mixed up with him. Well, and now I've got you, the next thing is to keep you. Woe be to me if I let out what I've found—it won't be mine much longer among these 'ere scoundrels. I must take precious good care, too, they don't make me drunk—that's the way they're likeliest to get round me. I'll be off back to Melbourne to-night—I'll skulk out of the camp when all the rest are asleep. . . . But, stop, let me see now, why shouldn't there be more nuggets where I found this fellow? There's no hurry; I'll just have a look to-morrow morning. Now I'm on the spot and about it, I'd best make the most of my time and get as rich as possible—all the jollier fun shall I have when I get back to England."

After taking three or four whiffs he continued: "I'm not sorry now I ran away from the ship. I've felt all along I've behaved very scurvily to the captain, God bless him! but I'll be able to make it up to him now, as well as I can, that's to say—oh! I wonder how he's been getting on! it was hard lines for him, no doubt, poor fellow! I wonder if he's sailed yet, and if that rascal Simpson's with him, the sly dog—he wanted to get me out of the way, I guess, but maybe, after all, I'll be back in time to take my passage in the 'Queen of the West.' To-morrow night I'll be off so sure as my name's Jack Adams."

At the sound of approaching footsteps he hastily replaced the treasure in his pocket and continued smoking with an unconcerned air.

"You've had a run of luck, I suppose, Mr. Adams, that

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you're a-taking it so easily to-night," said a voice behind him in a strong Irish accent.

"Luck or no luck, one can't be always at it. You're not one who sets an example of hard work, Dan," said Jack; "perhaps you've made your fortune already."

"My fortune! well, if I have, I've lost it again. I'm of too thirsty a disposition to keep anything in my pockets. All I get is turned into grog very soon, and finds its way down my throat, and dear enough is liquor in these parts."

Jack looked with a glance of contempt on the man who had now joined him. His bloated face, bloodshot eyes, and tottering gait, proved the habitual drunkard; though a young man, the passion for drink and a thoroughly dissolute life had made him prematurely old. It is with difficulty that we recognize Dan M'Carthy, once the smart young sailor, in the degraded creature who now sat down beside Jack Adams.

Dan had been some months at the diggings; he had, like so many other seamen, deserted his ship as soon as he reached Melbourne and heard of the gold-fields. He had by no means bettered his condition here; if occasionally he found gold he very soon lost it again — either it went in drink or in gambling; once or twice it had been stolen from him by companions as wicked but stronger than himself. In the society of the most desperate villains, Dan had now sunk to the lowest depths of vice and degradation. His lazy disposition was not inclined to work — he very soon got tired of digging for gold. Latterly he had been living on his wits, attaching himself to newcomers at the diggings, getting all he could out of them by doing odd jobs, or taking advantage of their simplicity to swindle them in various ways. No sooner had Jack arrived than Dan had noted him; he hoped he might prove an easy victim; he had made more gain out of sailors than any other class — they were more credulous and readier to part with their money.

Dan possessed a miserable tent which had been left him

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by a man in payment of an alleged debt. It had proved a happy windfall to him; he had succeeded in enticing several unsuspecting gold-diggers to share it with him at so much per week, that is, for as much as he could get out of them. Moreover, on several occasions, he had succeeded in stealing some of their gold while they were asleep, always contenting himself with small quantities at a time, lest suspicion should be aroused. Closely allied with a gang of card-sharpers, to whom he would introduce his victim as some of the steadiest and most trustworthy men in the neighborhood, of an evening when work was over these villains would propose a harmless game of cards to pass away the time. Unsuspicious of treachery the newcomer would consent; at first they allowed him to win, but in the end he very rarely escaped without losing every grain of gold in his possession. On two or three occasions Dan had had a very narrow escape of his life. His incensed victims, on discovering his rascality, had vowed vengeance against the thief who had robbed them, or the deceiver who had lured them into the vile trap where they had lost the hard-earned gains of wearisome toil. But Dan's cunning, added to his Irish wit and flattering tongue, had hitherto stood him in good stead, and though he had once been shot at by an infuriated sailor, maddened by drink, whom he had robbed of his all, he had luckily evaded the bullet and made his escape. The hour of retribution had not yet come; but Dan was beginning to feel that he had made too many enemies at the diggings, and that a change would soon be advisable. His position was becoming dangerous; moreover, he was tired of the life. He would try something else now — he would never make his fortune here, he was not born under a fortunate star, and he did not care to work so hard as other men did. He would go back to England again and see what would turn up for him there; to do this he must get back to Melbourne and work his passage back in a British ship. In the present state of

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affairs there would be no difficulty in getting a berth. Moreover, he had taken up a new profession. Latterly he had made enough money to keep him in victuals and drink (he required a large amount of the latter) by cooking for the men. He had made up his mind to offer himself as ship's cook on board any eligible vessel he found in the harbor; if that failed he must be content to serve as an ordinary seaman.

He had just come to this resolution when he sat down beside Jack, at the moment when he was rejoicing over his newly-gotten wealth. He had not by any means got Jack into his net yet. Though he had been playing the part of the disinterested friend, had cooked Jack's dinner several times without any remuneration, and had offered to share his tent with him for as long as he liked, only for the sake of his pleasant company, yet the bluff honest sailor mistrusted this blarneying Irishman. Though he often, alas! took a glass too much himself, he despised a thorough sot, as Dan plainly was; nevertheless there was no denying it, he had shown him several acts of kindness. Jack was of a grateful disposition, and tried to think that after all he might be a good sort of fellow at heart, much as he disliked his long tongue and cringing manner.

"I'm thinking of leaving these parts, Mr. Adams," said Dan. "I've had enough of them diggings. I'll never have any luck here. I'm soon going back to Melbourne."

"What will you do when you get there?" asked Jack.

"The very matter on which I was about to ask your advice, Mr. Adams. You are one of the last who have come here from Melbourne. You can tell me whether there are many ships there just now, if sailors are scarce, and if I'm likely to get a berth to England."

"Of course you can, if you pay for it," replied Jack.

"Oh! I don't mean that,—I want to get a berth as cook, and if I can't get that, as an ordinary seaman."

"They're so hard up for hands I guess they'd even take

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you, Dan M'Carthy," Jack replied, with a laugh, "landlubber that you are!"

"Landlubber, Mr. Adams! why I've been at sea nearly all my life, and if it had not been for my enemies and the prejudices of the ship-owners against my country, old Ireland, I should have been a captain before this."

"Well, I'd rather not sail in the ship you commanded, Dan M'Carthy. I should never have taken *you* for a sailor," said Jack, with a still louder laugh.

"Perhaps there might be some doubt about myself, because I've been so long ashore, but everyone could tell at first sight that you were a sailor, Mr. Adams; and a very fine one, too,—quite an ornament to your country."

"Don't 'Mr. Adams' me, and stop your blarney, Dan; I take it for as much as it's worth," said Jack, crustily.

"Come, don't be offended, Jack Adams. I only expressed the overflowing feelings of my heart as I gazed on your manly form. And you really think now I'll get a berth at Melbourne? Did you see any Plymouth ship there?"

"I should think I did. I deserted from one myself, I'm ashamed to say," replied Jack, with a sigh.

"That's the ship for me, then, if she hasn't left the port, when I get there. What's her name, Jack, and who is her captain?"

"The 'Queen of the West,' Captain Martin Archer, owners, Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, Barbican, Plymouth."

Dan started and exclaimed, "Bless my heart and soul! you don't mean to tell me my old friend Martin's a captain, do you, Jack?"

"There's no doubt of it; I've sailed under him twice, and a first-rate captain he is, too; but I shouldn't have thought he was a friend of yours, Dan. I can't think of two men more different in every way than you are."

"Why, we were brought up as children together, but our dispositions were always very different, and he's going to

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marry my sister, too, is Martin, unless he's changed his mind."

"You don't mean to tell me that pretty, modest girl, our captain's sweetheart, who he's going to marry as soon as we get back to Plymouth, is your sister, Dan?"

"Yes; that she is, indeed," said Dan, and a softer, kindlier expression came over his besotted face; "and I'm truly sorry to say I've sadly neglected her; I've not written to her for years; most likely she thinks I'm dead."

"You still seem to care for her, though."

"Care for her? Yes, that I do, and it's because I want to see her again that I mean to return to England," said Dan, his better nature asserting itself once more, and the tears starting to his eyes.

"Well, maybe if you make haste you'll get to Melbourne before our ship sails, Dan," said Jack. "She's sure to be detained for lack of hands to man her."

The better feelings awakened in Dan's breast by the mention of his sister soon passed away. He felt he had to make all the profit he could out of Jack, and find some means of getting to Melbourne as quickly as possible. He suspected from Jack's manner that he had found gold; he was not the man to sit down idle and despondent so soon because he had not succeeded; moreover, Jack's manner and appearance were the reverse of despondent.

"I suppose, Jack," he said, "you've no intention of returning to Melbourne to sail back in your ship? You've not been long enough here yet to make your fortune, to say nothing of the punishment you'd get for deserting."

"I'm off to Melbourne at once," replied Jack. "I've had enough of this sort of life; I'm ashamed of myself, too, for deserting my captain, who's a jolly good fellow, and always been very kind to me; I'll make it up to him if

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I can, and if I'm punished for deserting I suppose I must bear it."

"I'm surprised, Jack, that you are going away so soon, and as poor as you came. I gave you credit for more perseverance," said Dan. "But if you are going why shouldn't we start together? How do you mean to go?"

"Well, I suppose much as I came — getting a lift in a wagon now and then, but most of the way on foot, unless I can pick up a horse cheap, and sell him when I get to Melbourne."

To think of purchasing a horse Jack must have some money, then, Dan reflected; he was not going away as poor as when he came. He was all the more convinced that he had found a treasure, for he never otherwise would have been in such a hurry to leave.

"I know a man here who's got a horse to sell that would just suit you; I've no doubt he'd let you have it cheap," remarked Dan.

"If you'll tell me where your friend's to be found, I'll go and ask him," said Jack.

"He's down at the diggings just now, but he'll be back to-night, and I'll fetch him to you to my tent."

"All right; I'll settle about it then. I'm going to have a good supper to-night, Dan, and if you'll cook it for me you shall share it."

"You're very kind and neighborly, Jack," replied Dan. "I'll do any cooking for you with pleasure, and won't you come and sleep in my tent to-night? I'm quite alone; you'll find it better than lying on the cold ground under the tree, where you generally sleep."

"Yes; I'll accept your offer for to-night, Dan. I sha'n't start off till to-morrow morning."

A leer of satisfaction passed over Dan's countenance. Once get Jack into his den there was some chance of robbing him, and he was more and more confirmed in his

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suspicions that he was worth robbing. However, to succeed in his evil schemes he must have accomplices, who would demand a good share of the profits. He got up, remarking to his companion, "Well, Jack, we shall meet again in my tent to-night. I'm going now to make it comfortable for you, and to look up Ben Phillips to ask him about that 'ere horse."

"Yes, if I'm going to buy that horse the sooner the bargain's struck the better," replied Jack.

He still sat quietly smoking, watching Dan's bent figure and unsteady gait as he walked down towards the stream.

"I wonder if it's all true that this lazy Irish chap's been a-telling me. Martin never said a word to me about his sweetheart having a brother. He'd be precious hard up for hands before he took that fellow on board for a cook or anything else. He seems to know so much about Plymouth and our captain's affairs that I suppose I must believe him. Poor fellow! he seemed precious hard up, too. He's an easy-going chap, I guess; perhaps more fool than knave — still, I'll be on my guard, and not say anything about these here nuggets. Lucky I've got a good heap of dust, too; I can use that for buying the horse and any odds and ends, and keep my nuggets."

He shook the ashes out of his pipe, took the nuggets out of his pocket, and carefully examined them, weighing them in his hands with evident delight. Then he got up, and sauntered along towards the encampment.

He had not gone far before he met Dan M'Carthy, accompanied by a man of thoroughly villanous appearance.

"Here's my friend, Ben Phillips," said Dan; "if you'll come along with us he'll show you the horse he's willing to part with."

"All right," replied Jack, eyeing Dan's companion suspiciously, and slipping his hand into his breast-pocket to feel if his revolver was in its right place.

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Phillips led the way through various tents and shanties thickly strewn over the plain to a long shed which served as a stable, and stood a little distance off from the dwellings. The three men entered the shed. Phillips went up to one of the horses, which he led out by the bridle for Jack to inspect. It was a sorry animal indeed, — old, and so thin that its bones were protruding through its skin; it had, too, several bad sores, and looked quite incapable of bearing Jack's weight. When he took the bridle into his own hands and led out the wretched steed he perceived that it was so lame it would be entirely useless. His wrath was excited against Dan and his friend.

"What do you mean by offering me a brute like that?" he said, angrily, and with an oath. "Do you take me for a fool?"

Dan interposed with honeyed words.

"Come, come, Jack, don't be put out in such a hurry; the beast's tired — he has been at work all day. He'll be quite a different creature to-morrow morning, — so brisk and lively you'll find it no easy matter to mount him."

"Stop your humbug and lies, Dan," cried Jack. "If you've no other horse to sell except that brute I'll take myself off at once," and he turned to the door of the shed.

"I've got another horse, which perhaps may suit you better, but I can't let you have him so cheap as that one," said Phillips.

"Well, have him out then!" replied Jack.

The second horse produced was decidedly better, but it was a heavy animal, somewhat lame, too. Jack did not think he would get on much faster on its back than he would on foot; nevertheless, he was inclined to buy it.

"Is this the only one you've got for sale?" he inquired.

"I've only these two to dispose of," replied the man.

"And what do you want for this animal?" asked Jack.

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"How are you going to pay me — in money or gold?" inquired Phillips.

Jack had not yet exchanged the gold-dust which, by patient digging, sifting and washing, he had obtained from the soil, into hard cash. This could be done at a store, which was dignified by the title of "The Bank and Exchange," and which carried on a most profitable business. While hesitating as to the reply, Dan and Phillips exchanged glances, as much as to say, "Now we shall know if he's found any gold."

"I've got no cash," said Jack, at last.

"That means, I suppose, you've only got nuggets or gold-dust? You can pay me in either," said Phillips.

"Well, in dust then. How much do you want for the beast?"

There was a twinkle of triumph in Dan's eye, as he winked at his companion, who named the sum he demanded in ounces.

"Well, you'll not get that out of me for your sorry beast," said Jack, indignantly.

A long haggling and disputing ensued; angry words and oaths were freely exchanged on both sides. Jack was determined not to give more than double the real value of the horse. Dan played his usual cunning part, entirely in favor of the owner of the horse. At last, however, the terms were finally agreed upon, for the object of Dan and his companion was rather to discover how much gold Jack had than to make a good thing out of the sale of the horse, which Jack at the same time was eager to purchase that he might hasten his departure from the diggings, and get back to Melbourne. The bargain struck the three betook themselves to the store where the business of weighing gold-dust was carried on, Phillips leading the horse.

A noisy crowd was collected round the shed, into which some miners were passing and others coming out. Evidently a busy trade was carried on here, especially of an

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evening, when the men congregated hither not only to pay up their scores and conclude their bargains with the various store-dealers and with each other, but also to learn, as far they were able, how many fortunes had been made in the day, — who had been lucky and who unlucky.

Jack and his companions had to wait some time before they could get up to the table where the gold was examined and weighed. Many of the men began to chaff Dan, who was a regular butt among them, asking him who his new friend was. Phillips, too, was questioned how much he had sold the horse for, and if the purchaser had made his fortune and was going to ride off to Melbourne? He gave them to understand that the chap to whom he had sold it was a sailor and a greenhorn, whom he believed had found a treasure, or he wouldn't be in such a hurry to get off.

As this information was passed on from one to the other all eyes were turned upon Jack, who was now regarded with no little interest by the assembled miners. The weighing of the gold-dust, when Jack and his companions at last reached the counter, was eagerly watched, and the high price paid for the horse noted. As soon as the purchase was concluded, Jack passed quietly through the crowd, and taking his newly acquired property by the bridle, turned in the direction of Dan's tent, by whom, after he had exchanged a few words with Phillips, he was closely followed.

Jack was annoyed at the manner in which he had been watched by the diggers round the store, and at the observations he had overheard. He was more suspicious than ever. He would shake off Dan if possible, — he felt he had had enough of his dangerous company. However, he would keep to his word and share his supper with him in his tent. In the middle of the night, when Dan was asleep, he meant quietly to slip away. He tied up his horse close to the tent at a spot where he could see it through the entrance; he thought it quite likely the rascal of whom he

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had purchased the animal would endeavor to steal it during the night, perhaps with Dan's assistance.

Having bought a good piece of meat for their supper he gave it to Dan, who at once set to work to light a fire and cook it, while Jack lay stretched out at full length in the tent with his eyes on the horse.

"You got that horse dirt cheap," said Dan.

"Three times his value, if you call that cheap," replied Jack.

"So you say, but you don't think so. Oh, you're a clever one to drive a hard bargain. Ben isn't a match for you at it, Jack."

"He's a thorough vagabond, I'm convinced," said Jack, "and a precious fool, too, to think I should have been green enough to buy that first beast he trotted out."

"He thought you only wanted a baggage horse, he explained to me afterwards," said Dan.

"Very fine, indeed, — and you think I believe you?"

"Come, come, Jack, don't be put out of temper, or it'll spoil your supper, and mine, too; I assure you you've made a good bargain, and when are you off for Melbourne?"

"To-morrow before sunrise," replied Jack.

"I wish I could go with you; but I ain't a rich man like you, Jack, who can afford to buy a horse," remarked Dan, sorrowfully.

"You'd better walk it, and take your chance to get a lift in a wagon," answered Jack.

"No, no — it's too long a trudge for me. I'm sure that horse of yours is strong enough to take us both. I wish you'd let me ride behind you, Jack."

"No, thank you, Dan," said Jack, with decision. "I don't want any company; besides my weight's quite enough for that beast — he's lame already; and I want to get to Melbourne as soon as possible."

Dan continued to plead for some time, urging his weak-

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ness and poverty, and his desire to reach Melbourne to sail to England in Jack's ship. But it was of no avail. Jack was determined he would have no more to do with M'Carthy. His associates were plainly the greatest villains at the diggings. He felt sure that he had got an inkling that he possessed gold; he had observed the winks and glances exchanged between him and Phillips; he knew he would play him false if he could make any profit by doing so; in fact, he was already prepared for any act of treachery on the part of his ill-conditioned companion.

When the supper was well-nigh cooked Dan asked Jack what he meant to have to drink. He replied he would go and get a quart of beer at the bar down by the stream. Dan proposed whiskey. He said he hadn't had a drop for days, and should like to drink Jack's health before they parted. If Jack would give him the money he would go and get a bottle, and the ale as well. To this Jack consented, and Dan left him to look after the meat roasting at the fire while he went to purchase the liquor.

But Ben Phillips and two other men were on the lookout for Dan. As soon as he was seen descending the hill they came up to join him.

"Well, what's the news?" said Ben.

"That he's got either a good heavy lot of gold-dust or some nuggets, I've no doubt," replied Dan. "He says he'll be off before dawn to-morrow morning. He refuses to take me with him."

"Before dawn to-morrow morning," repeated Ben, thoughtfully; "it must be done to-night, then — we haven't much time to lose."

"He's a strong, powerful chap, isn't he?" asked one of his companions.

"Yes, that he is," replied Dan; "quite a match for you three."

"Ah! but we'll get round him somehow; where are you off to now, Dan?"

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Going to get some liquor for our supper," he answered.

"Well, mind you, drug his beer or grog, whichever he drinks; once get him into a heavy sleep, and sure as my name's Ben Phillips we'll get all his nuggets and gold-dust away from him."

"And we're all to share the booty equally, remember, Ben," said one of the men: "none of your claiming a bigger share than the rest, as you did in the last affair of this kind in which we went partners."

"I swear it shall be divided into four equal parts, and that we'll all share alike," replied Ben.

"All right," said Dan; "don't forget your promise, Ben; you haven't the best of memories. But come, let's settle how our plot's to be carried out; when do you mean to come up to my tent?"

"Towards midnight," replied Ben; "Jack, by that time, after you have well drugged his liquor, 'll be sound asleep; *you* must pretend to be, till you're certain that *he* is, when you hear me whistle, come quietly out of the tent, and tell me if it's safe to begin business. We must first disarm him by getting hold of his revolver, then rifle his pockets, seize his treasure, and be off. I'll spring on the horse, taking the gold with me, so that if the worst comes to the worst he won't be able to overtake me. If he makes much resistance, and we're likely to be overpowered, we've all got our revolvers, and can soon settle him."

"And if you gallop off on that 'ere horse of yours, Ben, and take all the gold with you, I should like to know how we're to know how much there is, or that you don't swindle us when you come to divide it," said the man who had before spoken with distrust of Phillips' honesty.

"What a suspicious chap you are, Ned!" interposed Dan; "I promise you I'll watch very closely how much dust or nuggets Ben gets hold of. Besides, we shall all be there, and can see, when the fellow's pockets are turned out, what's in them."

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Ned's suspicions were somewhat allayed, and the plan of campaign having now been decided on, Dan went to purchase the beer and the whiskey, mixing with the former a drug which Phillips had given him.

"What have you been up to all this time?" said Jack, when Dan at last entered the tent carrying a bottle and a jug; "to no good. I bet that steak's pretty well done to a cinder. I wish I'd gone for the beer myself."

"There was such a crowd round the store I couldn't get served, Jack. I've been as quick as ever I could — I'm quite out of breath now from running up the hill."

"I don't believe a word of it," said Jack, suspiciously; "you've been up to some mischief, I know, gossiping with that villain Phillips, or some of his rascally chums."

"You're in a bad temper, Jack, because you're hungry and want your supper — that's always the way with sailors," replied Dan; "from the way you talk one would think I was a-laying some plot against you, instead of trying to do you a service."

"Well, and I'm not sure that you ain't. I don't trust you a bit, Dan," he replied, surlily.

During the meal, Jack began to recover his good temper till he tasted the beer, when he swore a fierce oath, and exclaimed —

"You rascal, what have you put in this beer? or is it beer at all? — beastly stuff, not fit for a dog. Come now, you shall have a draught of it yourself."

"No, thank you, Jack, I don't drink beer; leastways when I can get such good whiskey as this; but I swear the beer's good; there were lots of miners a-swigging away at it in the bar when I bought it."

"None of your lies to me," cried Jack as he emptied the contents of his mug on the ground, and then pouring out another, pushed it towards Dan, adding, "Now drink off that, you vagabond, and make no bones about it, or it'll be the worse for you."

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The effect was instantaneous; Dan took up the mug and began to drink, making many wry faces, and Jack sat with his eyes fixed on him till he had drained the mug to the dregs.

"Now, Master Dan, you know what kind of a fellow you have to deal with," said Jack, quietly. "I think I'm a match for you, and for your rascally friends, too; don't play any more of your tricks on me."

Dan did not reply; he was completely cowed and disconcerted, too, for Jack had displayed considerable sharpness, as well as energy. Would the plot be successful now? How could he be able to resist the influence of the drug? Jack would be on his guard; if he slept at all it would be lightly; he would be thoroughly prepared for an attack, and probably be a match for his three assailants. He must escape if he could, and warn them of this change of circumstances.

Jack, balked of his beer, drank the whiskey; Dan, too, had such frequent recourse to the bottle that before they had finished their meal it was exhausted. Dan saw in this an excuse for getting away.

"The bottle's empty, Jack," he said. "Shall I just run down and get another?"

"You'll not budge from the spot where you're sitting till I'm off to-morrow morning, Dan. I'm up to your pranks now. You've had quite enough grog, and so've I."

Dan's last hope of escape vanished with these words. It was a sorry lookout for him. His confederates would, if worsted in the scuffle, believe that he had betrayed them, and revenge themselves upon him, while Jack plainly suspected that there was a plot to rob him, and would be on the alert, and ready for any emergency. A terrible and irresistible drowsiness was coming over him, —he must, ere long, yield himself up to sleep. His only hope was that when the attack took place he would be able in the darkness and confusion to effect his escape,

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and thus evade the wrath and vengeance either of Jack, or his own friends.

It was not without a feeling of glee that Jack watched Dan vainly struggling against his increasing drowsiness. He chaffed him unmercifully; asked if it was owing to the hard work he had been doing all day, digging in the sun, and washing the ore in the stream. But Dan was soon too sleepy to heed his remarks, or to reply. In a very short time after supper he sank into a heavy slumber.

"He's safe enough till morning," quoth Jack to himself. "I've nothing to fear from him. Fallen into his own trap; but there's some villanous plot afloat, I know, and I can't tell how many are in it. Well, I'm quite prepared for half-a-dozen of 'em. I'll make short work of any fellow who dares to lay a hand on me."

He got up and went outside the tent. It was a dark night, heavy clouds obscured the stars. His horse was grazing quietly. A few lights might still be seen in the tents and shanties by the side of the stream. He went back to the tent, stirred up the embers of the fire, put on another log of wood, glanced with a smile of contempt at Dan, who was snoring loudly, then lighted his pipe and lay down by the side of the fire. He pulled out of his pocket a heavy silver watch, which he wound up, and then holding it near the flames, remarked,—

"Just eleven o'clock. Well, I'll rest myself a bit, and then be off. I must take care not to fall asleep, though. I'm sure there'll be foul play before the night's over."

He lay there quietly meditating. He was not sorry on the whole that he had come to the diggings. He had got something by it, even if he hadn't made his fortune. He wasn't sure about that, for he did not know what his nuggets were really worth. His conscience, however, severely reproved him for his conduct to Martin. He felt it was a crime to have deserted his ship, which was increased ten-

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fold by his ingratitude towards his captain, through whose influence alone he had got the berth on board the "Queen of the West," and who had shown himself in every way the kindest friend he ever possessed. Well, he must try and make it up to him somehow. If he could only reach Melbourne before the vessel sailed! It was quite possible, from all he had heard about the difficulty of getting hands, that he should still find her there; but he'd have a long, hard ride, and no telling what sort of adventures by the way.

Notwithstanding all his efforts he became drowsy, his pipe slipped from his lips, his head began gradually to sink down; there was little doubt that he would soon be sound asleep. Dan, meanwhile, remained motionless; the only sound that could be heard was his snoring and the occasional neighing of the horse outside.

It was now close upon midnight. Suddenly Jack started and involuntarily put his hand to his revolver. A few smouldering embers of the fire sent out a faint light; he sprang to his feet, stirred them up, and produced a feeble flame, but sufficient for him to see his watch, which pointed at ten minutes to twelve. He had been asleep, then. "What a fool I've been!" he exclaimed; "but it's lucky I woke up — it's high time to be off." He looked through the opening of the tent; it was a dark, cloudy night. Then he crouched down over the fire, took out his nuggets again to be sure that they were all safe, and prepared for the start. As he was loosening the rope by which the horse was fastened, he thought he heard footsteps—he listened—yes, and voices too, talking in a whisper and approaching the tent so rapidly that he would not have time to unfasten the horse and spring upon its back before his assailants would be upon him. Well, he was ready for them; he would sell his life dearly and make a desperate resistance, however great might be the odds against him. Straining his eyes through the darkness, he now saw three men coming slowly

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up the hill; he contrived to conceal himself behind the horse, so that at first they did not observe him. When they were within a few yards of the tent they stopped, and one called in a loud whisper, "Dan, are you ready?" No reply. The words were repeated in a louder tone,—still no answer.

"That rascal's been drinking again, and gone to sleep himself, I bet, Ned."

"The vagabond!" replied the other, with an oath, "what's to be done then?"

"It don't make much odds," said the third man; "the sailor chap's safe to be asleep, too; his liquor was well drugged; we can make short work of him. Leave the Irishman asleep, and pocket his share of the plunder."

"A good idea, Ben — we three are quite strong enough! Come on, then, and let's get the job done as soon as possible."

Ben nudged his companion on the left, put his hand on his shoulder and whispered something in his ear. He had at that moment perceived Jack behind the horse. They stopped at once, and seemed to be consulting together. But they had not much time; Jack had overheard quite enough to prove to him that the time for action had arrived, and that by an immediate attack he might put his enemies to a disadvantage. He sprang like a tiger into the centre of the group — with one blow of his fist he laid Ned senseless on the ground, he seized the third man by the throat, shaking him till he howled for mercy, with one hand, while with the other he struck Ben Phillips such a blow in the chest that he reeled backwards, falling against the tent. But Ben was a man of iron, a desperate fellow, well up to an encounter of this kind: the hero of a hundred assaults, burglaries, ambushes, an escaped convict, and a criminal of the deepest dye; he soon recovered himself, and no sooner was he on his feet than he pulled out his revolver and fired at Jack, who still had hold of his

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other assailant. The ball entered Jack's left shoulder. He felt a sharp pain and knew at once that he was wounded, but turning fiercely upon his antagonist he dealt him with his right fist such a cut in the eye that he staggered and fell stunned to the ground; then springing on his horse he urged the animal by every possible effort, and galloped furiously down the hill in the darkness in the direction of the sea-coast.

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CHAPTER XXII.

A MOTLEY CREW.

One by one thy griefs shall meet thee,
  Do not fear an armèd band;
One will fade as others reach thee,
  Shadows passing thro' the land;
Do not look at life's long sorrow,
  See how small each moment's pain;
God will help thee for to-morrow,
  Every day begin again."

— A. A. PROCTER.

WEEKS had elapsed since the arrival of the "Queen of the West" at Melbourne. With the greatest difficulty and with unwearied patience the captain had succeded at last in unshipping the cargo and in lading the ship with her homeward freight. It had been hard and very slow work indeed; Martin had been obliged to work himself like a common dock laborer; desertion and sickness had reduced his men to four. He was himself quite worn out by anxiety and exertion, but he was firmly resolved to do his duty to the best of his ability, and would not take a day's rest till the whole of the cargo was shipped. The agents of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs at Melbourne expressed to him repeatedly how highly they esteemed his conduct, and in every letter they despatched to Plymouth wrote in warm terms of praise concerning young Captain Archer. The orders from England were, that the vessel was to be despatched as soon as possible, a crew got together at all risks, and that if any of the hands who had deserted could be induced to return, a promise was to be made to them that the past

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should be forgotten, and their desertion remain unpunished.

Simpson continued faithful; he plainly perceived that more was to be gained by remaining at Melbourne than by undertaking a doubtful expedition to the diggings. The chief mate, though slightly better, showed no signs of being well enough to resume his post, or indeed of leaving his bed for many a long day. The second mate, therefore, would succeed to his berth, and with it the power he so greatly coveted: this would give him increased means to annoy and circumvent his enemy the captain, who would have trouble enough with the rough crew he must put up with, if, indeed, he succeeded in getting a crew together at all.

Martin's heart sank within him when he saw the sort of hands who manned the ships that sailed from the port. How could discipline ever be maintained among such a set of rogues and vagabonds? The majority of them were landsmen, who had no knowledge or experience of seamanship; some were escaped convicts; others, blacks and foreigners — a set of desperadoes gathered from all countries, many of them maddened by their failure at the diggings.

The ship was now ready to sail, — hands to man her alone were wanting. That Simpson must be chief officer was inevitable. Martin foresaw the trials and difficulties which the promotion of his second mate would entail upon him. He had indeed made every effort and sacrifice to conciliate him whilst they had been in port. Though Simpson had not worked as the captain had done, but contented himself with merely superintending the discharge and stowage of the cargoes, Martin had made no remonstrance. He consulted him on every point, and treated him with the greatest kindness. Simpson put all this down to fear; he had made up his mind that the captain was afraid of him, an idea which gave him no little satisfaction.

Gradually Martin began to collect a crew; one or two of his former hands, on promise of the past being forgotten,

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returned. They had been unsuccessful at the diggings, and were only too glad to be received on board on the old terms. A few seamen, who had deserted from other ships, also joined, but the rest formed a very unpromising lot; they were nearly all landsmen, though most of them professed that at one time in their lives they had served on board ship. Still the full complement was wanting, and until it was filled up the "Queen of the West" must remain at Melbourne.

It was a sultry evening, after a broiling hot day. The captain was pacing the deck, and thinking sadly of the gloomy future before him. Never previously had he looked forward to a voyage with such apprehensions. Three men and Charley Barry were the only ones, so far, in the whole ship's company in whom he could put any real confidence. His chief officer was his bitter enemy; he could not depend upon him in any emergency, or to aid him in the maintenance of discipline. How different matters would have been had Robinson been able to resume his former post. As yet he had no second mate; it was not likely that any man with a proper certificate would present himself, in which case he must temporarily place in that post the best and most experienced of his able seamen. Cook and steward, too, were still wanting. He thought of his old friend Jack Adams; his desertion had pained him more acutely than anything during these last sad weeks. Badly as he had behaved, however, he could never forget Jack's former kindness, and that to him, under Providence, he owed his life.

He leant over the bulwarks, watching the boats as they glided over the glassy surface of the sea. One was evidently coming to the ship, but he took no particular heed of it, as he knew that all the hands were not yet on board. However, as it approached nearer it attracted his attention, for he thought he recognized the man who was being rowed towards the vessel. He was a strongly built, much

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sunburnt fellow, wore a new straw hat and very good clothes. He had a bundle with him, and a small box. Martin started up, and a smile of pleasure passed over his haggard face. There was no doubt of it, the occupant of the boat was none other than Jack Adams.

As soon as he perceived Martin on the deck of the ship Jack stood up in the boat and waved his hat. Martin now observed that his left arm was in a sling; his friend then had been in the wars, a matter of no surprise to any one acquainted with Jack's hot temper.

In a few minutes the boat was alongside. Jack soon climbed on board, followed by the boatman with his baggage. Martin greeted him warmly; it was impossible for him to conceal his delight at Jack's arrival, though he knew his first words ought to be those of rebuke, for desertion in a seaman is a serious and punishable offence which can never be lightly regarded. He had never expected that Jack would have been guilty of it. Martin shook him warmly by the hand, but before he could say a word Jack exclaimed: —

"I've come to ask your pardon, captain, for my cowardly conduct in deserting you. I'm heartily ashamed of myself. I was in liquor that night we arrived in port, and was persuaded by Simpson and others to be off to the diggings, but that's no excuse for me. I'm quite willing to submit to the punishment I know I deserve. I've come to ask you if you'll have me back again, — not that I think you'll care much to take such a runaway vagabond again."

"Oh, yes, Jack, we'll have you back again and welcome," replied Martin, kindly. "Not that I don't feel you did very wrong in deserting, Jack; your running off that way and leaving us has grieved me more than anything that's happened since we've been here. I don't understand about Mr. Simpson. I didn't think you and he were such friends as that you were likely to take his advice."

"When a man's had a glass too much, captain, he's not

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master of himself, and goes quite contrary to his natural feelings; so it was with me that night," replied Jack.

"What's the matter with your arm?" asked Martin; "and how smart you are, my lad; you must have had a run of luck at the diggings."

"Yes, good luck and ill luck, but it's a long yarn, captain, I have to tell you whenever you care to hear it."

"Come along into my cabin, Jack, and tell it to me now; I've much, too, to talk to you about."

They went into the captain's cabin, where Jack related the whole story of his adventures from the night when he was persuaded by Simpson to desert to the diggings till that morning, when he had arrived at Melbourne.

When he mentioned Dan's name he asked Martin if it were true that he knew such a fellow; he could scarcely believe it possible that he was, as he stated, Kate's brother.

"Yes, indeed," said Martin with a sigh, "it is only too true, — poor fellow! he had his good points once; and from all you say, Jack, I believe now he loves his sister. She thinks he's dead, because she hasn't heard of him for years. She'll be glad enough to learn that he's still alive; I'll write and let her know it at once. But I can't help hoping Dan M'Carthy 'll find a passage to England in some other ship than ours. He was always a troublesome fellow to deal with, and from what you say, and from my own knowledge of his character, he must be worse than ever now."

"Don't have anything to do with him, captain, — there isn't a bigger rascal in the colony; he's a cowardly blackguard who'll stick at no lies and no deceit if he can get anything by it. He betrayed me shamefully, as you shall hear." said Jack, indignantly.

"Well, go on with your yarn, Jack," said Martin.

He related the story of the drugged beer which he had forced Dan to drink, of the night attack, and his desperate fight with the robbers.

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"I galloped off for my life," he said, "for I didn't know how many more scoundrels might be after me, or how soon those two chaps would recover the blows I dealt them. Well, I hadn't ridden far before I felt rather weak, and my shoulder pained me a good bit. I stopped and got off my horse, and when I had my jacket and waistcoat off I found my clothes were soaked through with blood, which was still streaming from the wound. I tied it up as well as I could with a handkerchief; all the time I was in a great fright lest I should be pursued, but I heard not a sound. It was getting light now, and I was in the midst of a flat country, so could see if any one was approaching; I didn't see a creature anywhere. I mounted my horse again and galloped on in the direction where I knew the sea-coast was, and to my joy soon came on to the track which leads to Melbourne. I met several parties on their way to the diggings; they generally stopped and asked me a few questions. I let 'em all see I had a revolver ready for use. Towards evening I came to a small village; the inhabitants were all farmers and shepherds; they looked at me with suspicion as I rode up — I'm not surprised at it; however, I went up to a woman who was taking in some clothes hanging out to dry, and asked her if I might rest for the night in her house. I said I was wounded, having been attacked by robbers, and that I was willing to pay her anything she asked for a meal and a night's lodging. She plainly enough didn't like my looks, but said she'd go and ask her husband. After I'd waited about a quarter of an hour she came back with him; he was a big, strong chap, but had a kind heart, and so had his wife. 'You look pretty well done up, mate,' he said, 'and whether your story's true or not we'll give you a lodging for to-night.' I think he felt after overhauling me that he was a match for me in my present plight. I tied the horse up in a shed which served for a stable, and then went indoors. My shoulder pained me more than ever. The woman saw

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how I was suffering, and said she'd look at the wound and see what she could do for me. She was a bit of a nurse, and had once been in a hospital. When she had washed and examined it she said I must be a strong fellow to have ridden all that way with a bullet in my shoulder after losing such a lot of blood. 'That bullet must be got out somehow,' she added, but she wasn't quite up to that work, and didn't know who was to do it. She made me as comfortable as she could, and they gave me a hearty meal. I couldn't sleep much that night because of the pain, and next morning I felt very bad and not up to a long ride. The farmer and his wife told me I needn't trouble about moving on if I was in pain; I was welcome to stay as long as I liked. I thanked them, but said I must be getting on to Melbourne to catch my ship. But there was no doubt I couldn't go that day. The good woman told me there was a young man who lived some miles off who understood surgery, and who she thought could get the ball out of my shoulder; if her husband could get through his work in time she'd persuade him to ride over and fetch him. I thanked her heartily, and that same night these kind folk brought the surgeon over to see me; he examined the wound and said it was quite an easy job to get that bullet out; he made short work of it, too, but the pain was dreadful; I couldn't help howling and groaning, though I tried not to. I had to stay three days more at that farm; though after the operation I soon began to get better, the surgeon said it would be dangerous for me to begin my long ride too soon. The good people wouldn't take any reward. I shall never forget them; they saved my life. Then I had a precious long, weary ride on here; my wound still gave me a good deal of pain. When at last I got to Melbourne the first thing I did was to inquire if the 'Queen of the West' was still in port. The reply was, 'Yes, and likely to be for some days to come.' This was a relief to my mind. Then I went and sold one of my two nuggets

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and bought a new rig-out; that's why I look so uncommon respectable. I thought it best, too, to go to a surgery and get my wound dressed, for it's not healed yet, and I've got to go there again to-morrow. As soon as all this business was done I took a boat at once and came out to my old ship."

"And I'm heartily glad to welcome you back, Jack," said Martin, who had listened to his story with the greatest interest.

"But when I get back to Plymouth I suppose I'll be clapped into jail," said Jack, gloomily.

"No, you won't, though you allow yourself that you deserve it. I've orders to take any of our hands back who choose to come, with the promise that their desertion shall be overlooked."

"How's that, captain?"

"Because we're so hard up for hands. We're forced to do all we can to induce seamen to join; half the crews that leave Melbourne now are landsmen. I'm sorry to say I've got a lot of 'em aboard."

"That's a poor lookout for us; but Mr. Robinson's a good chief officer, who always sticks to you through thick and thin — he'll help you to keep them in order," said Jack.

"You don't know all the difficulties we've had, Jack," said Martin; and he told him about Robinson's serious illness, and how there was no hope of his resuming his post.

"Then will Mr. Simpson be chief officer?" asked Jack.

"Yes, it can't be helped," replied Martin, sadly.

"We shall have a hard time of it, captain. I don't wonder now that you look so careworn and wretched; then you'll have no second mate at all, I suppose?"

"As I can't get a man who has a mate's certificate, I must put one of the few who have been faithful to me into the second officer's berth. Now, if you'd only kept steady,

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Jack, you'd have had it; but a chap who has deserted can't expect promotion."

"No, that he can't; he's lucky to get off without punishment," said Jack.

"Blake's the senior man, and a smart, steady fellow enough. I shall give him the place, I think," said Martin.

"You couldn't do better, captain," said Jack. "But Mr. Simpson don't like him at all."

"I sha'n't ask his opinion," replied Martin. "I've done my best to be friends with him, but it's no good."

"I've got a favor to ask of you, captain," said Jack, and he pointed to the small box he had brought aboard with him. "In this 'ere box is a big nugget of gold I dug up in the country yonder; it's worth a heap of money, I'm told, and I'll make you a present of it if you'll accept it."

"You're very kind and generous, Jack, but I couldn't take it. Don't be offended if I refuse. I am, thank God, comfortably off, for what with my good pay, the money my poor father left me, and Kate's and my savings, we've plenty to set up housekeeping. I shouldn't like either to take what you got by deserting. It wouldn't only be against my conscience, but it would look as if I winked at your running away, that we both might get some profit of out it."

Jack looked very disappointed, but he saw the truth and reason in Martin's words.

"I'm sorry you won't have it, captain. I'm very well off from having sold the other one — though I'm told I was nicely swindled about it. Bless me if I know what to do with that 'ere nugget," and he looked at the box with an air of perplexity. "May I leave the box in your cabin for the present, captain?"

"Yes, for the present, but on your own responsibility, Jack; and remember, I'm quite decided I can't accept your generous offer," said Martin, firmly.

"Thank you, captain; and now with your leave I'll go

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ashore again, for I've got to see the doctor, and have left some of my things at the lodging-house, and to-morrow morning I'll be aboard for good and all, I hope, and turn in to my bunk in the forecastle."

"All right, Jack," said Martin, as he shook hands with him warmly. "Good-night, take care of yourself — keep clear of bad company and drinking saloons."

"No fear of that, captain. I've had enough of that sort of company of late. Good-night," and he ran down the gangway and jumped into the boat awaiting him.

Martin felt deeply thankful for Jack's return. He would now have a friend at his side on whom he could rely. It was only when Jack was away from his influence that he was led astray. He had never suspected that Simpson had had a hand in Jack's desertion, but it only proved to him how deeply rooted was his hatred to himself, and how eagerly he sought any opportunity to annoy him. Dan's unexpected reappearance in the neighborhood was another cause of trouble and apprehension. He was glad that he was still alive, for Kate would indeed rejoice, and bad as he felt he must be from Jack's account, yet, however low he had fallen, there must always be a hope of a change of heart and life in one created in the image of God, and for whom the Redeemer had shed His blood. But Martin felt he should be obliged to refuse to receive him on board if Dan found his way to the "Queen of the West."

Next morning Jack came on board bringing the rest of his traps, but, though he reported himself better, still lame of one arm. When Simpson saw him he changed countenance at once; Jack's appearance was a very unpleasant surprise to him; he had hoped he was safe in the diggings for a long while yet: he knew the influence the captain had over him, and was vexed to think that he should have another ally; for whatever happened he knew Jack would stick closely to Martin.

At a glance Simpson perceived that Jack had been in

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luck's way ; he was newly rigged out from head to foot. Well, he had profited, then, by taking his advice ; he would try and make something out of that. Had it not been for him Jack would not have left the ship and made such a rapid fortune.

"You're soon back, Jack Adams," he said when they first met.

"Yes, and glad enough to get away from them diggings."

"You've been lucky, though, I'm sure ; you wouldn't have come back so soon if you hadn't ; your clothes, too, betray you," said Simpson.

"Well, I got on as well as most chaps do in the time, but I had trouble enough, too, and am lucky to have got off with my life," replied Jack.

"I see you have been in the wars," said Simpson : "how did that come about ? "

Jack told him as much of the story as he pleased, but said nothing about the nuggets. Simpson tried hard to get out of him what he had found at the diggings, but it was of no avail ; Jack was well on his guard against his old foe.

The captain was making every effort to obtain hands, for he longed to be out of port and on the homeward voyage. Three days after Jack's appearance a whole troupe of miners, after varied success, arrived in Melbourne. Those who had a run of luck crowded the drinking saloons and filled the streets with their noise and uproar ; others, who had been less fortunate, or who, as was often the case, had squandered all they had gained in folly and drink, were seeking employment, some as dock laborers and porters, but most of them endeavoring to get berths on board ships, and thus work their way back to Europe.

A group of these fellows surrounded the office of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs' agents on the quay ; they had seen the advertisement that the "Queen of the West," bound for Plymouth, required a number of able-bodied seamen. Here was a chance which was not to be lost. Captain Archer

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was in the office as well as Simpson, the chief mate, and the men were admitted one by one to be questioned and inspected. Those who could prove that they had served before on board ship were accepted with little hesitation, however unpromising they might be in other respects. Among them was one man over forty years of age, who gave himself out to be a thoroughly experienced seaman; his repulsive features, which told of a career of drink and dissipation, seemed familiar to Martin. When he asked his name, and he replied, "Bill Tozer," at the same time giving Martin a nod of recognition, the captain started, as a whole host of unpleasant reminiscences of his early days and first voyage came up into his mind. It seemed as if he was to be beset by old enemies on all sides. This man, whom he had lost sight of for so long a time, would be a most unacceptable shipmate; his notoriously bad character was not likely to have improved; his face certainly did not indicate that it had. But as there was no reason why he should be refused more than any of the others, and if Martin raised any objection it would be put down to his cherishing an old grudge against him, he made no remark, and Tozer was told off as one of the crew. Though this day had brought them a rare set of vagabonds, yet it increased the hopes of their speedy departure, only a few more hands being required to make up a sufficient complement to man the vessel.

The following day was Sunday — probably their last Sunday ashore. Accompanied by Charley Barry, Martin attended again upon religious services. Never before in his life had he felt a greater need of spiritual refreshment; for courage to confess his Lord and Master; for strength to do his duty in the hard, stern battle which he saw before him. His spirit sank within him when he thought of the wild, reckless men whom he would have to control — men who had been subject to no law but their own wills and inclinations — with all those disadvantages of youth and in-

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experience which told so heavily against him. Two of these men, he knew — and one of them his chief officer — were his sworn and inveterate foes, who would lose no opportunity of increasing his difficulties and inciting the others against him. It was a sad and bitter prospect. Never had he poured out his whole heart so fervently in prayer to his Father in heaven as he did that morning. And his prayer was heard, for comfort and courage seemed to be bestowed to his despondıng heart. He remembered how, through the varied scenes of his life, in the many dangers and difficulties which had beset him, his Saviour had never forgotten or forsaken him; had led him by the hand, had never suffered him utterly to fall; had strengthened him to resist his foes, and to withstand the manifold temptations of the evil one. He Who had ever been at his side in the past would surely not abandon him in the future; he thought of the words of the psalm, "Though an host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident." The path of duty was a thorny and rugged one, as he had already experienced. It was a hard struggle to live a life of simple obedience to the will of God. But He Who had appointed that duty, Who had plainly called him to that life — for he had never taken a step in it without praying to Him for guidance — would arm him with strength sufficient for the battle; His faithfulness and truth would be his shield and buckler. He resolved then, as he rose from his knees with a fresh supply of grace and courage, to bear cheerfully the cross which his Divine Master had seen fit to lay upon him. He had asked Him to govern the unruly wills of those over whom he was appointed as captain, and to turn their sinful hearts, but if they were bent on insubordination and wickedness, he must, God helping him, do his best to maintain discipline on board his ship, and preserve the property entrusted to his charge. The man, he had heard it said, who has Christ to back him,

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is always in a majority, and with this and other bright thoughts which the service in which he had been engaged had suggested to his mind he looked more cheerfully and confidently to the bitter future before him.

In the evening he persuaded Jack and the other well-disposed men to come to church; a bright, hearty service, and a plain but stirring sermon, were much enjoyed by the men, who all expressed their satisfaction at having attended it.

On Monday morning there was much stir and bustle on board the "Queen of the West"—every preparation was being made for a speedy departure. The very few hands now required would, it was hoped, be forthcoming in time. The captain, who looked more cheerful than he had done of late, was with the chief officer, Mr. Simpson, telling off the men into their different watches. Blake was appointed second mate, and Martin took care that both Jack and Charley Barry were in his watch. For many reasons he would have preferred that Jack should have been in Simpson's watch, but he feared lest their mutual dislike should lead Jack to acts of insubordination; he however arranged that two of the men who had always been faithful to him should be with Simpson, as some kind of check on his conduct.

The appearance of his crew, when mustered before him, was enough to make his heart sink; they were as rough and motley a set as you could get together. There were Negroes and Lascars, Italians and Spaniards, together with a number of unsuccessful miners, whose great object was to return to the mother country.

But he was determined not to brood over the inevitable. He spoke to the men kindly and cheerfully, he was as friendly in his manner towards Simpson as if there had never been any difference between them. He had made up his mind that he would exhaust every means of conciliation and kindness before resorting to sterner measures.

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In the course of the day more hands, much of the same character, offered themselves. The ship was still without a cook and steward. In the evening a messenger from the agents' office came on board to say that a man who was evidently Irish had been to the office to apply for the cook's berth; he gave himself out to be an old friend of Captain Archer's; they had not taken his name, but would send him on board for the captain's decision early in the morning; they were not prepossessed in his favor, — he seemed the worse for liquor, he was a bad-looking chap altogether, — still, if he was up to his duties, and no one else could be found, the agents hoped the captain would accept him, and make the best of him.

When Martin heard this he felt as if it was the only drop which was wanting to fill up his cup of bitterness; there was no doubt that this man was Dan M'Carthy, and little hope, either, that he would be able to refuse him. His only chance was that some one else might apply for the same berth, and that was a very faint one. He sent word that he would come on shore early in the morning, and see the man.

He called Jack and told him what he had just heard. "Don't let him come aboard, sir, if you can help it; he's as cowardly a villain as I ever set eyes upon; I never met a bigger liar, and I've seen some big ones in my time. He'd kill his best friend for money enough to get drunk on."

"You judge him hardly, Jack, — he's got some good points, as the worst have, if we could only find them out, — still, nothing'll induce me to have Dan M'Carthy on board my ship, unless I'm positively forced to."

The captain went on shore early next morning, and he had not been long in the office when Dan M'Carthy made his appearance. He would hardly have recognized him, so much was he altered. Directly he saw Martin he ran up to him, seized him by the hand, and greeted him with the

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warmest expressions of affection. Martin received these coldly; he knew their worth from bitter experience. He had previously informed the agents of his former acquaintance with M'Carthy, what a bad character he bore, and how loth he was to have him on board his ship. They sympathized with the skipper, but at the same time gave their opinion that if he really were fit for the post of cook, and none other could be found, it would be better to take him than to waste precious time in port till a more suitable one was found. On the previous day he had boasted to them so much of his attainments, and spoke so plausibly, that they imagined Martin judged him too severely. If he could be kept from drink he might do well enough.

"Only take me, Martin," said Dan, "and you'll never repent it. I'll cook you such a dinner as you never ate on board ship before, and all the men'll be content and in good humor from the dainty dishes that I shall serve to them. I've been taught by a famous Frenchman who was cook to an admiral in the French navy; when he wanted to go for a holiday he left me in charge of the galley, and sure enough I cooked so well that not only did the admiral never suspect his *chef's* absence, but always complimented him next morning on the good dinner he had given him. I only left the French frigate because that cook got jealous of me."

He would have run on talking like this for an hour had not Martin pulled him up sharply.

"I have heard something about your goings-on at the diggings, Dan; do not think that I believe a word of your stories! Why have you never sent your poor sister a word of news of you for all these years? She thinks you're dead, and many a tear and many a sleepless night have you cost her. Bad fellow as I knew you were, I still thought there was one good point about you, affection for Kate, but you seem to have lost even that now."

"No, Martin, no, I love Kate still, indeed I do. I often

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blame myself for not writing to her. I meant to do so, but I knew she'd got you to care for her, and thought she wouldn't wish to hear from a good-for-nothing fellow like me. And is she well, Martin, and does she talk of me sometimes?"

Martin saw he had touched the only chord which responded to any good feeling. The love for his sister was still there; if he was forced to take Dan he must endeavor to work upon that. "Yes, Dan," he replied, "she was well when I last heard from her, and often indeed does she talk and write about you. You have been an unnatural and ungrateful brother, but I'm glad you're ashamed of yourself."

"That I am, Martin, that I am," he answered; "but you'll take me, won't you? I'll promise to obey your orders strictly. You'll never have to find fault with me; I've just become a teetotaller, and signed the pledge last night, so you needn't fear that I'll touch a drop of liquor" ——

"Stop, Dan," said the captain, severely, "tell no more lies. I know only too well the value of your promises."

"I want so much to get back to Plymouth and see Kate once more; oh! don't refuse me, Martin," whined Dan. "Only think how grateful Kate will be to you for bringing me back, and when she sees what a reformed character I've become through your good influence"——

"I'll think the matter over, Dan," Martin interrupted him. "Come back this afternoon. I can't listen to you now."

The agents made every possible effort to secure another cook, but all to no avail. As a steward had been found, and there was now a sufficient crew — incapable as many of them were — the berth of cook was the only one to be filled. They urged Captain Archer, therefore, to accept Dan M'Carthy, in which case the ship might sail to-morrow.

Martin was obliged most reluctantly to give way. However, he said he accepted M'Carthy under the strongest

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protest, which he recorded in writing, and would take no responsibility for what might occur from having a man whose character he knew to be so bad on board his ship.

Next morning Dan came on board and installed himself in the galley. When he saw Jack he expressed the greatest delight at meeting him again. But Jack stopped him at once. He said it was no use his trying that game on with him, — he knew the trick he had played him at the diggings, and what a thorough rogue he was. He wasn't fit to come on board a respectable ship, and he'd warn every man of the crew to be on his guard against him. Dan in vain tried to defend himself. He said it was all a mistake; that he had nothing to do with the plot to rob him; had he only been awake he would have taken Jack's part; that he had been accused of the murder of Ben Phillips, and that he'd had to run for his life to escape being lynched.

They were coming to high words on the subject when Simpson passed by, and ordered them to separate. He noted Dan's appearance, whom he then saw for the first time. He was evidently an enemy of Jack's, — he might perhaps prove a useful ally to him some day.

All hands were set to work now to get the ship under weigh as quickly as possible. The awkwardness and ignorance of most of the men were at once apparent. The skipper had great difficulty to make his orders understood. The few who belonged to his original crew worked with a will, doing their best to make up for the deficiencies of their shipmates. At last the "Queen of the West" sailed out of Melbourne harbor. Martin was thankful to leave a place where he had suffered so much, and to feel that he was really homeward bound; still, he never looked forward to a voyage with sadder forebodings.

At first they were favored with fine weather and fair winds, but a couple of days had not elapsed before several of the crew showed symptoms of insubordination. The lazy ones refused to work, the habitual drunkards, not con-

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tent with their rations of rum, clamored for more, and became riotous and insolent when it was denied them. The captain was resolute in refusing, — he gave them to understand that he would not put up with the slightest resistance to his authority. With such a crew he felt it would never do to show any sign of weakness; with the greatest sternness he must maintain his authority to the utmost.

Simpson, though as surly and short in his answers to the captain as ever, did not for the first few days give him any cause of complaint; the truth was that he was playing a waiting game; he had not made up his mind yet how he had best act to derive the greatest profit for himself. He was cunning and cautious, — a few days would decide him what line to take. He was on very bad terms with Jack, with whom he had exchanged high words the day after they left Melbourne. He had hinted to him that, as it was through his advice he had gone to the diggings, and as he knew he had made a large sum of money, if he possessed any generosity in his disposition he would give him a share of it. This incensed Jack, who expressed himself very strongly as to the impudence of the proposal, and told the chief officer plainly that he knew well enough what his motive had been in persuading him to go to the diggings, — that he wanted to get him out of the way because he was the captain's friend, — he'd no wish to do him any kindness, he was sure; it had turned out quite contrary to what Simpson had expected, for he had been pretty lucky, and had got back in time, too, to join his ship. Simpson was furious, — he turned pale with rage, and threatened to have Jack locked up for insubordination to his superior officer; but Jack knew this was an empty threat which he dared not carry out.

Simpson had taken care to make friends with the cook. He listened attentively to all his blarney, and heard his version of the way in which Jack left the diggings. According to Dan he had shot two quiet, honest miners there, rifled

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their pockets, and made off with the plunder. In the encounter he had been wounded, as Simpson must have already perceived, for Jack still was unable to make much use of his left arm. Dan also related to the chief officer a whole string of stories against the captain, all of which were gross exaggerations, or pure inventions. Simpson felt that in this new cook he had a most valuable ally. But Dan did not give equal satisfaction to the other officers or men; there were constant complaints of the food being badly cooked, or the water for coffee or tea not being ready boiling at the proper times. The galley, too, was always dirty, and its contents in disorder. The captain was soon obliged to administer a severe reprimand to the cook. He was, as as usual, ready with a number of plausible excuses and promises of amendment, but when Martin spoke to him a second time, still more sternly, he was so saucy and abusive that he threatened, if he had further cause of complaint, to land him at the nearest port, and there obtain another cook.

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CHAPTER XXIII.

THE MUTINY.

"A strong man,
For where he fixed his heart he set his hand
To do the thing he willed, and bore it thro'."
— TENNYSON.

"O mischief, thou art swift
To enter in the thoughts of desperate men."
— SHAKESPEARE: ROMEO AND JULIET.

AFTER the "Queen of the West" had been at sea rather more than a week she encountered very squally weather. The captain was thankful this had not come on before. He hoped he had now got his crew into some amount of training and discipline, and plainly made his authority felt among them. However, when dirty weather came on he found how difficult it was to manage so large a ship with such lubberly and inexperienced hands. He had often no little trouble to get his orders executed, and was constantly finding, to his dismay, that he was not supported as he ought to be by the chief mate. Simpson was showing his old spirit of opposition to the captain. By leniency to the faults of the men he had made himself popular with the worst among them, who were, unfortunately, the majority. He had struck up, too, a great friendship with Tozer, who had developed into a thorough ruffian, and hated Martin even more than he had hated his father. He was indignant at being under the orders of a young fellow whom he had known and tricked as a boy. He and Dan together related in the forecastle all manner of stories about Martin's early days, some founded on fact, others

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gross fabrications, among which the Lisbon incident was repeatedly told with many additions. All this helped to bring the captain into contempt with the crew. Ridicule of all kinds was heaped upon him, and especially on account of his religion.

On the first Sunday the captain had service as usual, which only a few of the men attended. Charley Barry played the hymn tunes on the harmonium. This caused much laughter and bitter mockery. Some of the crew, who would have gladly taken part in the service, were prevented from doing so through fear of the chaff and ridicule they would get from the chief mate and his friends. Martin bore it patiently; it was only what he had been led to expect. In such a case as this there was no use remonstrating with the men. He could not force them into religion, and would rather they absented themselves from the service than that they should come unwillingly. He was as cheerful and kindly as ever in his manner to those whom he knew were scoffing at him behind his back. He knew from experience that he would never win any one to the cause of Christ by putting on a long face, or talking to the men like a tract. Such means, however well meant, generally bring the good cause into still greater contempt. Example was certainly in this case better than precept.

Jack never allowed the captain to be laughed at in his presence. He always warmly took his part.

"If he likes to be a Methodist, as you call it," he said to Tozer, Dan, and a lot of others that Sunday evening in the forecastle, "what business is it of yours? It don't do you any harm. Why shouldn't he and Charley sing psalms if they like to? The captain never interferes with our songs — why should we with his? He's got his own religion, and for my part he's welcome to keep it. He's not one of those chaps who are always poking religion down other people's throats. I should like to know if he's ever meddled with your religion, Tozer?"

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"I've got none to meddle with," he replied, surlily.

"So much the worse for you, perhaps," said Jack.

"He always preached to me whenever he's had a chance all my life," remarked Dan; "never has he given me any peace. I've known Martin Archer from a boy, and his father before him; Methodism's in the blood, mates. It brings ill luck to sail under a Methodist captain. I'm sure I wouldn't if I could help it. His father came to grief, and his ship, too, and it'll be the same with Martin, I'll bet you anything."

"That's what I always say," echoed Tozer. "I don't believe in Martin Archer. He's a downright canting hypocrite, I say."

"You're a liar," said Jack.

"You're another," said Tozer.

Jack, though still very weak in the left arm, was quite ready for a fight; he was on the point of springing at Tozer and dealing him a tremendous blow with his right fist, when he was held back from behind by a powerful grasp. He turned sharply round and saw it was the captain.

"Come, lads, no quarrelling," he said, good-naturedly. "You let your temper get the better of you too easily, Jack."

"I can't stand being called a liar by a scoundrel like Tozer, sir," replied Jack, excitedly.

"Nor I by a ruffian like Jack," said Tozer.

"Probably you're both of you in the wrong; but I sha'n't allow any fighting. We've a heavy squall coming on, and I don't want to have my best hands unfitted for work."

Jack turned away somewhat sulkily. Tozer said nothing. The captain left the forecastle.

"Listening outside — the sneak," remarked Dan, when he was gone.

"Just what one would expect from a Methodist like him," said Tozer.

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"I don't believe that of him, Dan," remarked another of the men, a rough sort of fellow, one who had been to the mines and come back. "I don't hold that 'ere captain to be such a bad sort of chap as you make out. He's been kind enough to me since I've been aboard this ship, and I'll speak up for folks as I find 'em. You two have got some old grudge against the skipper, and your game is to get us chaps to help you to pay it off. Now I for one don't see that game."

"You'll have had enough of him before you've been long on board this ship, Tom," said Tozer.

"We shall see about that," said the man as he got up and left the forecastle.

"He'll go over to the enemy if we don't take care," said Dan.

"Let him — we're five to one already, sure and certain," said Tozer with an oath, as he went out.

The skipper was right when he said a squall was coming on. They had a hard night's work of it; before morning it blew almost a hurricane, the sun rose on a wild, angry sea, and everything portended that the gale would increase in violence. The ship labored heavily; she had a full cargo, and required in a storm more skilful handling than it was possible to get from her raw and undisciplined crew. The men whose ignorance and cowardice had from the first been a trial to the captain now turned mutinous as well. Several of them refused to go aloft to reef the sails when ordered by the master; the sails, consequently, were in a moment rent into tatters. On the few hands who were willing and obedient to orders all the hard work fell. A lot of the others crowded into the forecastle, refusing to move till an extra ration of grog was served out to them. Martin resolutely refused this demand; he knew that if he now gave way it would be considered an indication of weakness on his part, which would only be followed by fresh demands to extort still further concessions. He spoke to

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the men with his usual kindness, encouraged them to do their best, adding that if each man would put his shoulder to the wheel the ship would soon weather the gale, while if they still continued idle, and withheld the aid they could so well give, he could not answer for the consequences. They continued surly and morose; not one of them moved. Then the skipper changed his tone altogether, addressed them sternly and threatened them with punishment. Tozer, who was the ringleader, defied the captain and addressed him with the greatest insolence. Martin, who was accompanied by the second mate, the boatswain, Jack, and two other reliable men, ordered that Tozer should be put in irons and confined in the hold. A yell of fury greeted this order; it was utterly unexpected by the mutineers, and they were quite unprepared for it. They had counted on intimidating the captain, and never imagined that he would have courage, with such heavy odds against him, to do more than threaten. But Martin saw at once the danger to which the ship and her cargo, as well as the lives of all on board, were exposed by giving way for a moment to a mutinous crew. The evil must be nipped in the bud, and he was determined to put a bold face on it, before the men were more prepared and organized for resistance. At a sign from him the boatswain and another man seized Tozer, and though he struggled violently and called on his mates for aid, they were so taken aback by the suddenness of the skipper's action that they confined themselves to oaths and exclamations, while Tozer was quickly manacled and dragged below. A few of the men were so intimidated by the captain's severity that they returned quietly to their work.

"You never made a better stroke than that, sir," said Blake to Martin. "I hope matters 'll mend now; that chap's about the most desperate of the whole lot. I can't understand an officer like Mr. Simpson being such chums with him."

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"It can't be for any good motive, Blake,—he won't be best pleased when he hears what I've done. God knows, though he is my enemy, I bear the man no ill-will, but I couldn't do otherwise after the way he spoke to me; as captain of the ship it is my duty to make myself respected."

"Of course it is, sir; but it's a bad lookout, there being such a lot of them chaps."

"Yes, it is, indeed, Blake; but we few must keep well together, and encourage the doubtful ones by giving them plainly to understand if they do their duty and are obedient to their officers they will be handsomely rewarded when the voyage is over."

No one on board was more surprised at the captain's quick and severe measures to repress the rising insubordination among the crew than Simpson. He had not given him credit for such decision of character, which had quite interfered with his own plans and designs. He would now have to go upon a different tack. He had endeavored slyly to instil into the men's minds contempt and mistrust of the captain, owing to his youth, inexperience, and Methodism, as he called his religion. He had given the men to understand that he was not to be feared, that he might threaten, but he would not dare to carry out his threats. The sharp and sudden punishment inflicted on Tozer had proved him to be quite wrong in his estimate of the skipper's character. He now changed his tune altogether, and spoke of the captain as a hot-headed, hard-hearted young man, utterly unscrupulous in the means he employed to gain his ends, who was quite unfit to have the command of a ship, but who, by his fair words and plausible conduct, had hoodwinked the ship-owners. The men's lives were not safe in the hands of such a skipper. There was no telling what he wouldn't do next; it might be quite justifiable to deprive him of the command. To put an elderly and respectable seaman like Tozer into irons was an unheard-of proceeding, and only proved what a desperate fellow the captain was.

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While insinuating all this against Martin, he was still careful not to compromise himself, and took as yet no open action in favor of the mutinously inclined men. His object was to encourage a revolt in which he would maintain a neutral attitude himself, but be quite ready to profit by it should it prove successful. His position as chief officer gave him a power for mischief of which he took every advantage.

The stormy weather continued, the gale increased in violence, and the ship made little way, the wind being generally contrary. Day and night the captain was at his post; he took but little rest, and worked as hard as any of his men. The few who had sailed with him on the outward voyage and had remained faithful to their ship became now more attached to him than ever. His unselfishness and devotion to duty, his kindness and consideration to the crew, and his willingness in every way to share the hardships he could not lighten, completely won their hearts. Jack, who was rapidly recovering from the effects of his wound, was from his strength and courage the greatest help to Martin. Charley Barry, no longer exposed to the persecutions of Simpson, was developing into a strong and active lad. The second officer and the boatswain never swerved from their allegiance to the captain, working as hard as he did himself.

Dan expressed great indignation when he heard the fate of his old friend Tozer, but he said it was just what might have been expected from Captain Archer. Every one must look out for himself and be on his guard against such a violent-tempered, unjust chap as this skipper was. He was sorry now he had risked his life in this ship. Dan's laziness and neglect of work became the cause of more complaints than ever. Martin rebuked him severely, but to no purpose; one morning when the men who had been on watch the greater part of the night could get no breakfast, he vowed he would leave him at the first port at which they touched. Dan was more insolent than usual, and high words passed between them, which were overheard by Simpson. Martin

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was angry and indignant that the men who were hungry and tired through doing their duty should be neglected, and have to wait for their breakfast through the laziness of the cook, while he knew that others, who never did a stroke of work unless they were obliged, but happened to be friends of Dan, had all their wants more than supplied.

That evening Simpson came into the galley. Dan at once began the story of his grievances, knowing that in the chief officer he would find a sympathizer. He told him that the captain had spoken to him in the most brutal manner, and threatened to land him at the nearest port. He said he was mad with rage, had shook his fist in his face, and that he trembled for his life.

"I was passing the galley at the time, Dan," said Simpson, "and I heard a row; I knew the captain was blowing you up as usual."

"Oh! Mr. Simpson," replied Dan, "you little know how the captain hates me; he has always borne me a grudge, and never loses an opportunity of showing it. He did all he could to prevent my getting this berth, and now I've got it in spite of him he makes my life a burden to me. I'm sure I do my best, don't I, sir? You've no reason to find fault with me?"

"None at all, Dan," said Simpson, "I always get my meals in good time and well cooked, and I don't hear no complaints neither, from the men — except, perhaps, from a few grumblers like Jack Adams."

"Yes, Jack Adams, of course, but he's the captain's friend, and as big a ruffian as ever sailed in a ship; 'birds of a feather flock together,' you know, sir. I'm not surprised that he and the captain are so thick."

"I tell you what it is, Dan M'Carthy," said Simpson, "Martin Archer's not fit to have the command of a ship like this — his appointment was a mistake altogether, as I've said a hundred times. Willis & Dobbs were hard up to find a skipper, and this young fellow Archer, with his good

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looks, and his smooth speeches, and Methodistical airs, just walked down their throats. We'd danger enough in the voyage out through his ignorance and conceit; but then we had a well-trained crew — now, with a lot of inexperienced hands, heavy gales day after day, and with a young, headstrong, bad-tempered fellow like our skipper, who wouldn't stop at anything to gain his ends, I say our lives ain't safe, — we're running a precious risk, all of us; now there's that poor fellow Tozer, who's been kept nearly three whole days in the hold in irons; I say it's a cruel shame that a lad of twenty-three should have such power in his hands."

"That it is, Mr. Simpson, that it is," sighed Dan, "but that's another case of spite again. Tozer sailed under Martin's father, who was nearly as big a Methodist as his son. He and the captain fell out several times, and Tozer and I once played Martin a trick when he was a boy — which I've told you about before — and he's never forgotten it, or forgiven us, either."

"That accounts for it, of course," said Simpson; "Tozer must be released somehow or other; I believe if the men showed a bold front and insisted, the skipper would have to yield. The other day when he had Tozer locked up, his mates, who was sitting with him, never raised a finger to defend him. I didn't think before they were such cowards; most of them, too, have knives and revolvers, and there's no doubt that if it came to a fight they'd be more than three to one against the captain and his set."

"I was just as much surprised as you, sir; I expected more from them chaps, I'm sure. I wonder, when he laid hands on Tozer, that one of them didn't draw his revolver and shoot him down," remarked Dan.

"I guess it came on 'em all of a sudden," said Simpson; "next time they'll be better prepared,—you might give 'em a hint, Dan."

"With all my heart, Mr. Simpson, but I've already

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pretty freely expressed my opinion to them on the subject; in case now there was to be a mutiny, and it succeeded, what should you do, sir?"

"Well, now, look here, Dan," said Simpson, deliberately, "my position is a ticklish one; of course I'm all on the side of the oppressed, but it wouldn't do for me to take an open part in a mutiny. Supposing I did, and the captain got the upper hand, he'd think nothing of putting me in irons, and in the black-hole, as he did Tozer, and that would be a sorry lookout for you, for the hands would be worse off than they are already, if it weren't for me, because the captain's afraid to do all he'd like to do with an older man like me to take the chaps' part; on the other hand, if it succeeds, and the crew ask me, I'm ready to take the command of the ship, but till then I must be neutral — if I wéren't, when we got to Plymouth, the captain or some of his chums might witness against me as leader of the mutiny, and I'd lose my berth, and get fourteen years in jail into the bargain."

"You're a sly dog, Mr. Simpson," said Dan, "but you're quite right, and there are very few men on board who wouldn't be glad to see you captain, for which you're a far fitter man than Martin. But we must take care we don't have any chaps witnessing against us when we get to England."

"How are you to help it, Dan? You can't stop their mouths."

"Yes, we can — we must shoot 'em all, or send 'em adrift in a small boat on a rough sea, unless they swear on their solemn oath never to say a word about it when they get to Plymouth."

"That would be sharp practice — but sure enough," said Simpson.

"It's the only way, sir; and as to the captain — he must never see Plymouth again," he added, bitterly.

"Well, good-night, Dan," said Simpson, as he got up

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and turned to leave the galley — "you're welcome to tell the men what I've said, but be cautious and don't let it get to the ears of the captain, the second mate, or any of their friends."

"Never fear that, sir," said Dan; "trust me for letting out our secret to any but our own set."

Dan's evil nature, which had for so long a time ruled him without let or hinderance, was now triumphant in his heart. Those softer and better influences which responded to his sister's name, and to the recollections of his early boyhood, when he and Martin were friends together, were almost dead with him. He was so embittered against the captain, he looked upon him so entirely as his deadly enemy, that he had quite forgotten the many and repeated acts of kindness he had shown him, as well as his great forbearance under the sharpest provocation. He was a prey to vindictiveness and thorough selfishness. He had become a victim to the demon of drink. To satisfy that longing he would not have shrunk from any crime.

He did his utmost to foster discontent among the lawless and depraved men on board the ship. He told them they were under-fed, that the captain was trying to keep them on short rations, and that other skippers gave a much larger allowance of rum to their crew, especially in stormy weather, than Captain Archer did.

A mutinous and insubordinate spirit was rapidly increasing. Surly and impertinent answers were given to the captain; his orders were frequently disobeyed; his efforts to maintain that discipline upon which the safety of the vessel depended were vain, because he was not supported as he ought to have been by his chief officer; his prospects became gloomier every hour; meanwhile with little intermission the stormy weather continued.

It had blown almost a hurricane all day; the captain was worn out with hard work and anxiety; the men had been more insolent and insubordinate than usual; his

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heart sunk within him when he looked round at the pale, tired faces of the few who still bravely remained faithful, and who had toiled hard all day through the blinding storm and pitiless wind. How he longed to be able to reward these men for their unfaltering allegiance to him; but he could only speak words of encouragement and praise, with the promise that their fidelity should not be forgotten when the voyage came to an end. He had marked the angry looks and threatening gestures of the boldest of the ruffianly set who formed the majority of the ship's company. The leaden sky, the black masses of heavy clouds, the dark rugged waste of waters, on which no gleam of sunshine fell, were all in harmony with the gloomy, cheerless feelings of his desponding soul.

It was still early in the afternoon; Jack, whose duty had kept him aloft for the greater part of the day, came hastily up to Martin with an anxious and excited look.

"There's mischief brewing, captain," he said, "as sure as my name's Jack Adams. I overheard that rascal of a cook plotting something with two of them miner coves; all I could make out was that it's to be to-night. The worst of it is that most of them scoundrels are armed with revolvers or knives. Then, too, I'm certain Mr. Simpson is playing a deep game; for, look here, most of them chaps are the worse for liquor; they couldn't have got any grog unless he had it served out to them; he must have done that while you've been hard at work navigating the ship and couldn't see what was going on at the forecastle; let's be on our guard, then, and prepared for the worst; forewarned and forearmed. I've got my revolver all ready, and I hope you won't shrink from using yours, captain, — if it comes to a scrimmage."

"I shall try every means first, Jack, to bring them to reason; but if all fails, I should not hesitate to shoot down the first man who raised his hand against me, or one of the officers. I am responsible not only for the ship and

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her cargo, but for the lives of the crew as well; and if these fellows were to get the upper hand their ignorance of seamanship, as well as their love of drink, would imperil their own lives as well as the safety of the vessel. No, much as I should abhor to take the life of a fellow-creature, if it were plainly my duty I hope I shouldn't flinch from it for a moment," said Martin, sadly.

"Glad to hear you say so, captain," said Jack, "but I must be at the maintop again, I see, or we'll get into trouble. Have your revolver handy and loaded, and be prepared for any surprise. I've warned Mr. Blake and the men in his watch. He told me he was already on his guard, for Charley Barry had overheard much the same as I have."

He turned away quickly, to climb the rigging, leaving Martin more troubled than ever. A great crisis in his life was approaching; it was difficult to foresee the result.

But a brave man with a clear conscience, who trusts in God and is determined with His help to do his duty, does not, on such occasions as this, waste precious time in brooding over the future, or lamenting the difficult position in which that unseen Providence which men nickname Chance has led him. He immediately prepares for action.

Martin did this. He went at once to his cabin. He knelt down for an instant, and asked for the guidance of his heavenly Father through this impending trial. He implored Him to still the unruly passions of these evil men, and that whatever happened he might have wisdom and strength to act, not thinking of his own safety and interest, but of the men committed to his charge, for the preservation of his ship, and above all for the glory of God. He rose from his knees with a firmer courage and a calmer heart. He glanced at his father's picture and thought how he would have acted in such an emergency; then he looked at Kate's beloved face, which seemed by its bright cheerfulness to send a ray of light into his gloomy soul. He took

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the revolver which in this voyage, for the first time, he always kept loaded, out of a drawer, put it in his breast-pocket, and quietly walked to the post he had previously occupied on deck.

Fierce and angry faces, loud murmurs, greeted him as he passed along. Entirely disregarding them he gave his orders as coolly as usual to the boatswain, whose shrill whistle sounded clearly through the howling wind. Jack, together with some half-dozen of the hands, was aloft taking in every inch of canvas, as the wind was now blowing dead against the ship. The second mate was busy at the bows. Martin therefore for the moment stood alone on the poop. Simpson had gone below; he knew what was about to take place, and that it was his best policy to be absent.

About a dozen of the men, as rough and desperate a set of fellows as it is possible to imagine, some of them maddened by drink, their eyes flashing fury, with unkempt hair and beards, dressed mostly in ragged red shirts, with knives stuck in their leather belts, some carrying revolvers, and others armed with marlin-spikes or anything in the shape of a weapon they could catch hold of, now rushed up to the captain. Conspicuous among them, reeling along the deck, his eyes wild and red with drink, and flourishing a revolver in his hand, was the cook, Dan M'Carthy.

The skipper stood at his post; he looked down sternly at the mutineers; not a muscle of his face moved, he did not show the least sign of fear or surprise.

A big, rough fellow, who seemed for the moment to be the ringleader of the band, one Jim Johnson, who had been some months at the diggings, addressed the captain in an insolent tone, saying, —

"Come now, captain, we've made up our minds we've had enough of this sort of thing; we're not going to be kept on short commons any longer, and we won't submit to be at the mercy of a tyrant like you; we demand that our mate Tozer be set at liberty at once, and that a double ration of

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rum be served out to us. Now, do ye hear? look sharp and do our bidding, or it'll be the worse for you."

"Go back to your posts, my men," said Martin, as calmly as if he were backed by an army. "I should have thought you would all have learned by this time that I'm not the man to yield to threats, or to flinch from my duty. A man who openly rebels against the authority of his captain as Tozer did must be confined for the sake of the safety of the ship and the crew; and as to drink, you have somehow or other already got more than's good for you, and not a drop more shall you have to-day."

A howl of execration rose from the men, who flourished their weapons, but did not yet dare to attack the captain. Dan now came forward, a revolver in hand, rushed up to within a couple of yards of Martin, who at that moment said, in a clear, stern tone, —

"Listen, mates; you have learned already that I am a man of my word; remember, the first one of you who raises his hand to touch me I will shoot down without a moment's hesitation," and he drew the loaded revolver from his breast.

A few instants of silence followed these resolute words; then Dan said, in a mocking tone, casting a wild look of hate and malice at his former friend, and swearing a fearful oath, —

"You forget, Martin Archer, that we're some ten to one here; you won't escape that way. If you don't promise to release Tozer this moment I'll fire."

He advanced a step and held the revolver within a yard of Martin's breast, his finger on the trigger.

There was no doubt that the fellow was in earnest; the next minute the captain might be stretched lifeless on the deck, and the ship and cargo become the prey of the lawless set who formed the large majority of her luckless crew. Even if Martin's mind had not already been made up he had not a moment now to lose in reflection. A ter-

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rible responsibility rested on him; the lives of the men, his own life, too, were at stake, to say nothing of the safety of the vessel and her freight. For all this he was answerable; act he must, act quickly and decidedly, and the deed which stern duty urged him to perform was one from which every right-minded, humane man naturally shrinks: he must shed blood, deprive a brother man of his life, of that priceless gift which God alone can bestow and none can restore; whilst the man whom he must send with all his sins upon his head into the presence of his Maker was the friend and companion of his childhood, the dearly-loved brother of the girl who had given him her heart, and who on his return from this ill-fated voyage had promised to become his wife. Yet conscience told him plainly enough it was his duty; there must be no shrinking from it — not an instant's hesitation, or all would be lost. Never had duty before seemed to him so stern, grim, relentless.

It was a weird and savage scene. The elements combined to enhance its terrors; the ship was rolling and pitching heavily, the sun had set, the sky was black as ink, while every now and then a vivid flash of forked lightning seemed to rend the heavens in twain, illuminating sea, sky, the ship, and all around with a flood of violet light, making every object as distinct as in broad daylight, and giving a still ghastlier hue to the fierce countenances of the excited mutineers. Then the thunder roared in long and deafening peals, the wind shrieked through the rigging, the wild tumult of the storm drowning their angry voices and loud shouts.

In an instant the skipper's choice was made. To do his duty to God and man had ever been the one aim and object of his life — and should he shrink from it now because that duty was a stern and awful one? There could be no doubt to any honest, brave heart that this was an instance in which it was right to shed another's blood. He had

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counted the cost — he knew the penalty if he did not at once strike the blow.

There was a momentary lull in the tempest as Dan spoke those last insolent words. Jack, from his post in the maintop, had suddenly observed that something was wrong below. He had seen the captain standing alone, and the men crowding round him; with all speed he hastened down to the deck. To his terror he beheld Dan pointing a pistol at the skipper's breast. He was quickly making his way to the spot, when he heard two shots fired almost simultaneously.

Dan, expecting that Martin would be cowed by his words and resolute attitude, and might at the last moment grant their request and release Tozer, allowed about a minute to elapse before he fired. Perhaps if he had been sober he would not have been able to stand Martin's clear, steady gaze, or some spark of better feeling might have been rekindled in his heart, and caused him to drop the deadly weapon. But the captain perceived plainly enough that Dan was in earnest; he had given him every chance, and when he saw his finger on the trigger he pointed his own revolver straight at his antagonist and fired. At the very same moment Dan's pistol went off, the ball grazing Martin's shoulder.

A yell of horror and dismay rose from the men. Dan lay upon the deck a lifeless corpse: the bullet had penetrated his heart.

A ghastly pallor came over the skipper's stern features; it was only by a desperate effort of self-control that he could repress his feelings and nerve himself to speak. But still pointing the revolver in a threatening attitude at the other mutineers, he said in a loud, hollow voice, quivering with emotion, while he pointed to the dead man with his left hand, —

"Now, lads, you see I am a man of my word. God knows what it has cost me to do this, but I am ready to

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do it again to any man who dares stir up mutiny on board this ship. Return to your duties at once, every one of you."

The report of the pistols, the howl from the men when Dan fell, and the confusion visible on the deck, even in the dimness of the approaching night, had attracted all the crew to the spot where the tragedy had occurred. Jack was the first to reach Martin's side; he had been quickly followed by Charley Barry, and now both the boatswain and Blake, together with the other men who were faithful to him, had gathered round the captain, forming a small but determined band, who, as they were well armed and animated by a determined spirit, were by no means to be despised by the drunken and heterogeneous rabble, who in the death of one of their ringleaders had just witnessed so striking a proof of the captain's firmness and pluck. There was a murmur after he had spoken; a few threatening words were uttered, and whisperings exchanged between them; then Jim Johnson, the burly chap who had acted as spokesman, sullenly turned on his heels and reeled off to the forecastle, followed closely by his companions.

For the time, at all events, the mutiny was quelled. The captain's severe but resolute action had been effectual. But at what a terrible cost to him had this advantage been gained!

And where had the chief officer been during this terrible scene? He had, as we said, gone below, for, knowing what was about to happen, it was his policy to keep apparently neutral, till he saw which way the tide would turn.

But he was keenly on the watch. When he heard the angry voices of the men he came up the companion and stood with his head above the hatchway where he could just see in the twilight what was going on, but unobserved by the captain. He heard the fatal shot fired and saw Dan fall; doubtful as to what would follow he retreated

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then into the cuddy. He had seen enough for his purpose.

As soon as the men had dispersed, Martin went up to the corpse of his former friend, slain by his own hand. Death had been instantaneous; the bullet had penetrated the heart, from whence a dark stream of blood had flowed upon the deck. "Poor Dan," he said as he looked at his besotted countenance, over which the ashy hue of death had spread itself. "Oh, that it could have been otherwise! Poor Dan, may the Lord have mercy on your soul!" Then turning to the second mate, he said:—

"Blake, I'm terribly upset by this affair; I couldn't have acted differently, but I never thought it would have come to this. I want a few moments alone to collect my thoughts and recover my presence of mind. Mr. Simpson, for reasons best known to himself, is keeping out of the way. Take my place for five or ten minutes; we're going to have a dirtier night than any, I fear."

"All right, sir," said Blake, cheerily; "you've done your duty, and saved our lives and the ship, too, I trust. Every honest chap on board 'll thank you, sir, though I'm sure it wasn't pleasant to you to do it. Trust me and Jack Adams for looking after the ship while you go and get a bit of a rest, which you deserve more than any man on board, for you've worked the hardest."

"Thank you, Blake," said Martin, sadly, as he went to his cabin. Shutting the door, he flung the pistol down on the table, sank into a chair, and, burying his head in his hands, the strong man sobbed aloud. He was crushed, unnerved. Young as he was he had suffered much; during his life he had passed through many trials, but nothing could equal the intensity of the anguish which now possessed him. He had been prepared for the necessity of some desperate action — even the shedding of blood, — but that it was Dan's life that he should be forced to take, — that thought haunted his mind; and now it was all over,

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the bloody deed was done. With his own hands he had slain his early play-fellow, the brother of her whom he so soon hoped to call his bride. A stern, relentless necessity had impelled him to the terrible action. The God whom he had with all the power and intelligence of his heart and soul called upon to guide him to do the right knew how hateful, how utterly abhorrent to every sentiment in his nature it had been.

He looked up and saw Kate's portrait; she seemed to be gazing reproachfully at him. Oh! what would she say when she learned the truth! Could he ever tell her? Could he write it to her? How she had doated on that brother, grieved at his sins and wanderings, prayed constantly for him, and eagerly watched for tidings of him! And now . . . He pressed his hands against his throbbing brow, and starting from his seat, paced wildly up and down the little cabin. Then he threw himself on his knees and cried out in his agony: "O God, why hast Thou brought me to this? Have I deserved this at Thine hand? It is too hard, too hard, I cannot bear it!" He groaned in the bitterness of his spirit, and covering his face with his hands, remained for some minutes motionless on his knees. The words of the Psalmist came into his mind: "Will the Lord cast off forever; and will He be favorable no more? Is His mercy clean gone forever? Doth His promise fail forevermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? hath He in anger shut up His tender mercies?"

When he looked up, his eyes fell on his father's well-worn Bible and Prayer-book which lay on the table before him. He had been reading them the last thing before he left the cabin that afternoon. He took up the Bible: it opened at the Thirty-seventh Psalm, a portion of Scripture to which he had often turned for encouragement and comfort. How suitable many of these verses seemed to him now in this his hour of sore distress: "Fret not thyself because of evil-doers, neither be thou envious against the workers

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of iniquity. Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed. . . . The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and he delighteth in his way: though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down; for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand. . . . Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

He turned to the New Testament, and his eye fell upon a passage he well knew by heart, and which now spoke with wondrous power to his aching soul:

"There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, Who will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it."

Blessed words! He knelt again; he poured out the agony of his soul to his loving Father above; he entreated that he might be able to bear this and other trials looming before him in the inevitable future. He thought of the love of his Saviour, Who had died for him, Who had preserved and guided him through many a peril, Who had promised never to leave or forsake his faithful children.

And now calmness and courage gradually returned to his torn and anguished heart. God had so willed it. There had been no alternative; he could not have acted otherwise. Plainly did conscience, that most sacred Presence enshrined in every Christian soul to rebuke, to encourage, or to protest, tell him that he had done right. Terrible as it had been, it was the path of duty — stern, clear duty.

He put the little Prayer-book and hymn-book in his pocket, then, with a shudder, he took up the revolver and replaced it in his breast. Would to God, he hoped, that the deadly weapon had done its work, and that he might have no further use for it! But he must be prepared. He must not flinch in striving to maintain his authority, in following up the advantage which his sharp action had

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already gained, purchased as it had been at so terrible a cost.

When he appeared again on the deck, his face, though deadly pale, was calm and composed. His presence was much wanted. The squall was increasing to a hurricane, every hand was required to manage the ship. A faint cheer broke from the men when the captain again took up his post on the deck and gave out his orders. The boatswain's shrill whistle was heard through the raging of the storm, and many of those who had hitherto refused to work and remained sullenly in the forecastle, either cowed by the resolute action of the captain or induced by the knowledge that the ship was in danger unless all lent their hands to the work, returned to their duties. Simpson was on deck when Martin came out from his cabin, giving out his orders with more energy than usual. As soon as he learned that the mutiny was, for the present at all events, unsuccessful, that it had been nipped in the bud by the unexpected conduct of the captain and by the death of Dan M'Carthy, he perceived that his best policy was to ignore the matter altogether, and, by attending to his duties more carefully than usual, again throw the captain off the scent, and make him believe that he was in no way mixed up in it. However, Martin was quite aware of the part Simpson was playing. None but he could have supplied the men with the rum which had intoxicated them. He knew, too, from Jack, of his intimate relations with poor Dan. But in the actual state of affairs, with a hurricane blowing and a half-mutinous crew, he felt he could not do otherwise than overlook his chief officer's treacherous conduct, though he knew that sometime he must bring him to book, and accuse him openly of the cunning part he had taken in the wicked plot.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

OVERCOME.

"The way at times may dark and weary seem,
No ray of sunshine on our path may beam,
The dark clouds hover o'er us like a pall,
And gloom and sadness seem to compass all.
But still with honest purpose toil we on,
And if our step be upright, straight, and true,
Far in the east a golden light shall dawn,
And the bright smile of God come bursting through.
— W. CARLETON.

As night came on the hurricane increased in fury, and the ship became wellnigh unmanageable. Several yards and spars had been snapped off by the violence of the wind, which was constantly shifting to all the points of the compass. The captain did not leave the deck for a moment all night; he was occupied giving his orders to the men, and lending a hand himself when occasion required. He did his best to cheer and encourage those who were ignorant or inexperienced, but who showed a willingness to work. About a dozen of the crew remained idle and sullen in the forecastle; nothing would persuade them to move; the entreaties and threats of the boatswain were equally unavailing. For the present they had been completely defeated by the energetic action of the master; the hurricane, too, which had terrified many of their mates, and so induced them to lend a hand in the working of the ship, had also aided the captain's cause. They knew, however, that when it subsided most of those men would again join them; they depended, too, on the chief officer's aid if they could only

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obtain a temporary success, so they hatched fresh plots and consulted what measures should next be resorted to, in order to attain their evil ends. Dan M'Carthy's terrible fate, which he had brought upon himself by his determined insubordination, was spoken of by these mutineers as an act of vindictive malice on the part of the captain, a cruel and wilful murder. Whose life was safe for a moment under such a man? they said to any who was doubting which side to take. The skipper would, without hesitation, shoot any man dead who opposed him, or did not instantly perform his bidding. At all hazards, then, he must be disarmed and rendered powerless; they must show more spirit when the next opportunity occurred; they must not confine themselves to threats, oaths, and cries, but proceed to immediate action. M'Carthy had been sacrificed to their want of union and organization. Twice they had by this fault lost a leader. The next time they struck for freedom they were determined to be successful. The big chap, Jim Johnson, who had forced himself prominently forward as ringleader, was mercilessly chaffed by the others for showing the white feather, and beating so hasty a retreat when Dan fell. All refused to act under him again, and after much disputing one Dick Andrews, a strong, wiry fellow, an escaped convict, who had no regard for human life, and was accustomed to fighting and bloodshed, was chosen to lead the next attack on the captain and his friends. They could not have found a more desperate or unscrupulous man. There was to be no open mutiny now; the skipper was, at a fitting opportunity, to be seized, bound and, if necessary, murdered or thrown overboard. The second mate, Jack, and the few who it was known would be faithful to him to the very death, were to suffer the same fate or be cast adrift in one of the boats, as circumstances might dictate. Simpson was then to be made captain, he having already promised, on attaining that position, to grant all their demands, and submit to them in everything.

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Thus the night passed away, some working hard to save the ship, others cowardly conspiring to gain their own wicked ends, whatever might be the cost. Morning dawned on a wild and savage scene,— the whole heavens darkened by huge masses of black clouds, the sea running mountains high, which every now and then completely buried the ship, the men with difficulty holding on to the masts or bulwarks, fearing lest any moment they should be swept away by the violence of the waves. Their worn and haggard faces told plainly of the long night of toil and anxiety through which they had passed. None looked so thoroughly exhausted as the skipper; it was not only the sleepless night of hard labor which told upon him, but the heavy responsibility,— the mental anguish, the uncertain future, the issues of which it was impossible to foresee. Even the vigorous Jack showed signs of fatigue, but so great was his devotion to Martin that no entreaties from him would induce him to snatch a moment's rest. Except when his duties called him away he was always at his side.

The mutineers remained in the forecastle, biding their time. Fear filled the hearts of many; they knew the danger to which the ship was exposed, — at any moment they might go to the bottom. This was hardly the time for action.

Laboring heavily with spars and yards broken, and everything out of gear, the ship still bore up against the gale. That she had weathered it so long was owing to the skill and perseverance of her captain, and to the efficient aid given him by the few who supported him. All that day they toiled on; there was no abatement in the fury of the storm; enormous mounds of water crested with foam around them, with a dark and leaden sky above, there seemed no cheering ray in the gloomy prospect. Only in the sorrow-stricken heart of the skipper a still, small voice would whisper, "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and He knoweth them that trust in Him." In

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this world there seemed nothing cheering to look forward to, but he remembered the land beyond — the haven where all would be peace, —it seemed as if it might be very near to him now, as if his toils and trials would soon be over. There was the calm consciousness in his heart that he had done his duty, even if failure should be the result. He must leave his cause in God's hands, and trust that He Who orders all things for His own wise purposes would in the end make His righteousness to appear as the light, and His just dealing as the noon-day.

Towards evening there was a lull in the tempest; the sky, too, looked clearer, and the sunset more favorable; but a high sea was still running; the danger was by no means over; the time had not yet come for the hard-worked hands to relax their labors. At the urgent request of the second mate and Jack, the exhausted captain was persuaded to take an hour's rest on the condition that he should be roused at the expiration of that time. He turned into his berth, but, weary as he was, his mind was too excited by the terrible events of the last few hours, and by impending troubles, for sleep to visit his eyelids, and when he again appeared on deck he looked as pale and haggard as before.

The weather was clearing now, the mercury rising, and though there was still a heavy swell from the effects of the hurricane, the sea was smooth in comparison to what it had been during the last two days. The sun rose from a cloudless horizon, casting its warm, cheering beams on the pale faces of the weary mariners.

Martin had a terrible duty to perform. A sadder or more trying office for one in his position it is impossible to conceive. Dan's body must be committed to the deep. He must himself say the solemn service for the dead over his early friend — the brother of his betrothed — whom he had slain with his own hand. He dared not ask either of his officers to take his place. It would be a shrinking from

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duty which he felt would not be right, and also might be attributed to an acknowledgment on his part that he had acted wrongly in the sharp, short measure by which he had quelled the mutiny. No, it must be done and done at once; he could only ask God to give him strength to perform the sad and solemn duty — strength which he felt he did not possess himself, and which could only come to him from above. He spoke to Blake about it as soon as he could get a word with him, and by the second mate's orders poor Dan's corpse was sewn up in a sheet, and every preparation made for committing it to the deep. Then, after the men had breakfasted, Blake, Jack, and a few others, assembled at the side, and the captain, Prayer-book in hand, the deepest agony pictured on his pale countenance, began the service. It was the first time he had had to perform this office over a shipmate; a melancholy duty at any time, it was a terrible and heart-rending one now. His voice quivered with emotion as in a low but earnest tone he read the solemn words. They spoke of a blessed hope, of another and a happier world, of rest and peace, of resurrection to everlasting life. Could he hope that these blessings were for him who had perished red-handed, breathing murder and vengeance? for him whom he had himself sent into eternity, into the presence of his Maker? These were questions he could not answer — who art thou, O man, that judgeth another? As he committed the body of his old friend to the deep he commended his soul into the hands of the loving Father of all, Who alone can read the secret workings of the heart, and hear the last cry for pardon which comes from the soul ere it is severed from its earthly tabernacle, and ushered into the awful presence of its God. He thought of Jesus pleading for the worst of sinners; he thought, too, of his sister's unceasing prayers for her poor, lost, wandering brother.

As the body was launched into the dark rolling waves, Martin's self-control, which he had with such a strong

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effort maintained as he read the service, quite forsook him. Grief, fatigue, heavy responsibility, were too much for even that strong man to bear. The tears poured down his cheeks, he was quite overcome.

He was obliged to retire to his cabin to recover that presence of mind and stern self-command which so rarely forsook him.

Meanwhile the mutineers in the forecastle, perceiving that the gale had spent itself, that the sky was clear again, and the sea growing calmer, began one by one to emerge from their retreat and look about them. Dick Andrews came out first, at the time when the captain was reading the service over Dan's body. He saw at once what was going on. He called out to his shipmates, ——

"I say, lads, that 'ere skipper of ours has more cheek than any chap I ever met. What do you think he's up to now? Why, reading the burial service over the poor fellow he murdered himself. What do you say to that now?"

"Shame on the brute!" cried several of the men.

"It only proves to us," continued Andrews, "what a desperate scoundrel he is, and that our lives ain't safe for an hour unless we put a stop to his goings-on, and take the law into our own hands."

"He is a cool villain, there's no mistake," said Johnson. "We can't say whose turn it'll be next to be murdered by him."

"The sooner we strike for liberty the better," said one of the men.

"All very well, Bill," said Andrews, "but we must be cautious; if we fail again we know what'll be the consequence."

"We ought to win, for we've numbers on our side," said Johnson; "and if we score a success at first there's plenty of half-hearted men that'll join us."

"The skipper's pretty well knocked up now, — he's not regularly turned in for three nights, and after that, strong

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as he is, he can't be quite so much up to the mark as usual," said Andrews. "I'm thinking we ought to do something before the day's out. What do you say to it, mates?"

"Ay! ay!" shouted all the men.

"It's all very well to call 'Ay! ay!' now, but when it comes to the scratch will you go and turn tail before the skipper's fierce countenance, flashing eye, and pointed revolver? Don't forget how you've been cowed by him before, and remember, if we fail it'll be the worse for all of us; this'll be our last chance! If we don't win, he'll have the whole lot of us put in irons, and kept in the hold till the voyage is over."

"He'd never be able to do that," said Johnson.

"I'm not so sure of it," replied Andrews. "He's got a strong and trusty band of followers, and that big fellow Jack Adams, who's as faithful to him as a dog, is as strong as three of us. But listen to me, lads. Be always ready for action; I'll watch for an opportunity. You've chosen me for your leader; do just what I tell you, and we'll succeed," he added, with an oath.

"Come, lads," said Simpson, coming up to them; "ain't you going to do any work to-day? There's lots to be done. A pretty mess the decks are in after this gale. Look at our broken spars, torn sails, and rigging. You'd better lend us a hand, Dick Andrews; it'll be all the better for you."

"I don't see that, Mr. Simpson," said Andrews.

Simpson had formed in his own mind a cunning plan by which he thought the mutineers might gain their object, and by which he would attain the summit of his ambition and gratify his revenge against Martin. By persuading the men to return to their work and feign submission to the captain's orders he hoped to put him off his guard; then, by a sudden surprise, the mutineers might turn on the captain, the second mate, and the other few faithful ones, overcome them, and obtain possession of the ship. He

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was too cautious openly to propound this wicked scheme to the men, but by suggestions and questions he managed to instil into their minds the idea of the project he had formed, so that at last Andrews exclaimed, with an oath, —

"Yes, I see it now; a first-rate plan. Come, lads, set to work with a will. Do your best; put the captain off the scent; make him think he's regularly cowed us by his desperate conduct, and that ever after we're going to be as meek as lambs. Then, when we catch him off his guard 'll be our time for action, and we'll succeed as sure as my name's Dick Andrews."

"Bravo!" shouted the men, and they all scuttled out of the forecastle, obediently doing as Simpson told them.

As soon as the mutinous hands had been set to work in different parts of the ship, Simpson went up to Martin and remarked, coolly: —

"The sharp measure you felt obliged to resort to on Monday seems to have been effectual, captain. Those mutinous chaps in the forecastle have been quite subdued by it. You see they've all returned to their work this morning."

"Yes, Simpson, I'm very glad of it," said Martin, coldly. "I hope they'll continue to do their duty. I can only say that if there is the slightest symptom of insubordination again I shall not hesitate to put it down in as summary a way as I had to do on Monday; and I expect you, Mr. Simpson, as first officer of this ship, to aid me to the best of your power in maintaining discipline on board."

"As I have already always done," replied Simpson with calm impudence as he turned away.

Jack, who was standing near the captain, overheard these words.

"Don't trust him, captain," he said; "keep as sharp a lookout on Simpson and them other chaps as you would for shoals and quicksands in a foggy night going down Channel."

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"All right, Jack," said Martin, "but whatever their motive may be, I'm heartily glad they've set to work, for now there's a chance of getting the damage repaired which we've suffered by the gale."

"There'll be foul play before long, sure enough, captain," replied Jack. "I shall always keep my revolver loaded, and be ready for action."

"So must I," said Martin, sadly, "though God grant I may not be forced to use it."

The day passed quietly enough; the gale, having quite spent itself, was succeeded, as is often the case, by very fine weather; the sea at sunset had become quite smooth, the sky was clear, the stars shone forth brilliantly.

A colored man who professed to know something about cooking had been installed in the galley in poor Dan's place. The men had worked fairly well all day, the decks were cleared of the broken spars and splinters, the boatswain's whistle was attended to with more alacrity than hitherto, and the watches regularly kept. The skipper, however, took but little rest, — he never left the deck for more than an hour. Jack, too, refused to turn in when his watch was up; he kept his eye constantly on Martin, convinced that there was treachery on foot, and that Simpson's apparent approval of the skipper's action, and the changed conduct of the former mutineers, only veiled a new and deeper plot.

On the afternoon of the next day the ship was sailing slowly onward, favored by a gentle breeze; the sea was calm, the sun, sinking in the horizon, spread a flood of golden light over the ocean. The decks had been well washed and scrubbed, the brass and metal-work brightly polished up; the day's work was pretty well over: the men were sitting or lying about on the deck, some smoking, others mending their clothes, playing at cards, or leaning lazily over the bulwarks.

Simpson was walking up and down, his hands in his

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pockets; Blake, who had been hard at work all day, and up the greater part of the previous night, had turned in to his bunk, to get a few hours' rest. Martin was sitting on the poop surveying the scene below him, full of melancholy forebodings, though thankful for the present restoration of discipline. Now and then he turned his eyes towards the maintop, whither he had just sent Jack on the lookout.

Suddenly he was startled by the sound of a low whistle, not shrill enough for that of the boatswain, and which, under ordinary circumstances, he would not have heeded; immediately after he observed a movement among the men, and before he had time to rise from his seat he felt himself seized from behind, his arms held down by a powerful grasp. The skipper was a man of great strength, and by a desperate effort he freed himself from his antagonist, no other than Bill Johnson, who had been lying hidden under a coil of rope for some hours, watching his opportunity. Short, however, as the struggle was, it had given time for the other conspirators, — aroused by Andrews' whistle, the signal agreed upon, — to spring like tigers upon the captain, who, though he dealt them many a hard blow, was soon overcome by force of numbers, thrown down on the deck, and speedily pinioned. His revolver, which he had been unable to pull out in the scuffle, was at once taken from him, and a loud shout of triumph, mingled with oaths and curses against the prostrate skipper, arose from the men. But the conflict was not yet over. The surprise had been sudden indeed; the mutineers had so well arranged their plot that it had not taken longer to carry into execution than it has to relate; nevertheless, Jack Adams at the maintop, ever on the alert, no sooner heard the whistle than his suspicions were aroused. In an instant he was in the very thick of the fray, with a giant's strength dealing tremendous blows to the right and left, while the few men who were faithful to

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the captain, perceiving his danger, and the mutiny which had broken out, hastened to Jack's assistance. Charley Barry ran down to call up Blake, who the next moment appeared on deck. But the boy's intention had been foreseen by the mutineers, and the second mate was seized and pinioned the very moment he came up the companion A fierce battle now raged round the helpless and prostrate forms of the captain and second mate. Jack at last succeeded in drawing his revolver; he shot Johnson dead through the heart in a moment, on which a yell of fury arose from his companions. Firearms had not yet been resorted to in the combat — fists and marline-spikes had been the only weapons used. Simpson had persuaded the mutineers to abstain from bloodshed if possible. They would, he said, attain their ends equally well by disabling, pinioning, and imprisoning their antagonists, his desire being to prove that the captain had been guilty of cruelty and murder, and thereby caused this mutiny among his crew. Andrews drew his revolver, took aim at Jack, fired and missed. Before he could fire again, Simpson, who hitherto had taken no part whatever in the fray, though he had keenly watched it from the poop, came forward, and seizing Andrews' arm, said in a low voice: —

"No, Dick, don't take your revenge that way — remember the plan we settled on last night — I'll take care he does no more mischief."

Whatever means Simpson intended to employ to prevent Jack from doing more mischief were not needed, for numbers were overpowering even that strong young fellow. His mates had all been vanquished after desperate resistance — they lay stunned and bleeding on the deck. He alone maintained the struggle; but a desperate blow on the head from a marline-spike deprived him of consciousness for a moment, and that moment was seized by his foes to drag him down to the deck, and tightly pinion him. With the discomfiture of Jack vanished all hopes of successfully

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resisting the mutineers. They were victorious at all points. The ship was in their hands. The rebels were wild with delight.

"Now, lads," cried Andrews, "let's set our imprisoned shipmate at liberty before we do anything else," and a party of men at once rushed down to the hold and soon broke open the door of the cell where Tozer was confined.

With loud shouts he was conveyed on deck; his irons were at once removed.

"Let's put 'em on the captain," cried Andrews, "it's but fair that he should be treated as he treated Tozer, and would have done to us, had he dared."

"Hurrah!" roared the mutineers; "a first-rate thought of yours, Andrews."

The threat was at once carried into execution; the irons were fastened on the unhappy skipper, who lay bound and helpless on the deck. Tozer's first action, when he felt himself once more at liberty, was to go up to Martin, and with oaths and curses to kick him several times. There was not a man among these wretches who cried "Shame," neither did Simpson remonstrate. All the captain's friends being either wounded, stunned, or pinioned, could not render him the least assistance. Tozer's example was followed by several of the rest, and every imaginable insult was heaped upon the prostrate skipper. Resistance being impossible, he could only bear his hard fate with meekness and resignation. To appeal to men of such brutal feelings he knew would be fruitless, — he neither said a word nor uttered a groan. He tried to think of One Who had borne far greater sufferings and endured worse insults for him.

As soon as the men had sufficiently satisfied their cowardly vengeance by heaping insults and indignities on the skipper and his friends, they hailed Simpson as captain, and called on him to celebrate his promotion by serving out

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a double ration of rum. To this he readily consented. To make himself more popular he allowed each man as much as he liked; the consequence was that the majority of the crew were soon hopelessly drunk. Martin had previously been dragged down to the hold, where he was confined in the dungeon which Tozer had just vacated. The other men were left lying on the deck.

Simpson, with the very few who were sober, managed the ship. This, as the weather was perfectly fine, demanded no great exertion on their part. Jack, who had recovered from the effects of the blow which had stunned him, was making desperate efforts to snap the ropes which bound his arms and legs; his strength was so great that he would probably have succeeded and then liberated some of his companions in misfortune, had he not been observed by Simpson, who at once placed a man with a loaded revolver to keep watch over him.

"Treacherous scoundrel!" roared Jack, as Simpson came up to him; "don't think you'll escape justice; you'll pay for this yet."

"Hold your jaw, Jack Adams," said Simpson, "or it'll be all the worse for you; remember, I'm master of the ship now, and I'll stand none of your impudence," and he turned away.

He ordered the men to get the longboat ready; a small stock of provisions and a few barrels of water were put in her; she was then lowered into the sea. It was part of the plan decided on by Simpson and the mutineers that Blake, Jack, and the men who had been on the captain's side should be turned adrift in an open boat. It seemed the easiest way to get rid of them; there could be no chance then of their regaining the upper hand, and releasing the captain; that they would in all probability perish from hunger or founder at sea, far as they were from land, did not trouble the hearts of these cold-blooded villains. The project, however, could not be carried out till the morning,

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because Simpson had not hands enough at his disposal sufficiently sober to execute his commands.

Martin, handcuffed and in irons, sat in the dark, narrow den which served as a prison. He was suffering no little pain from the blows and bruises he had received from his mutinous crew, as well as from the irritation of the fettering irons. But all that was nothing in comparison to the agony of mind, the terrible anxiety which was weighing upon him. Accustomed as he was to a life of stern duty and self-sacrifice it was not so much his own hapless condition which troubled him now as fear for the fate which might be in store for his faithful shipmates at the hands of the evil and unscrupulous mutineers. What, too, would become of the ship and her cargo? If, as he expected, a speedy death was reserved for his friends and himself, how would his employers ever learn the truth? He had sat, as it seemed, for hours meditating on these gloomy prospects. There seemed no hope, humanly speaking, of any change for the better in the present state of affairs. He could only pray to Him in Whose hand are the issues of all events so to dispose them that, dark as they seemed now by His inscrutable providence, the right might triumph at last,—that the hearts of these sinners might be turned to Him, and that He would graciously watch over the souls and bodies of those on board who had done their duty, worked hard, and kept their allegiance to their captain and their employers.

He was absorbed in these thoughts, which were only interrupted by the sound of the drunken shouts and wild cries of the mutineers above, and by the beating of the waves against the sides of the ship, when the door of his den slowly opened, and Charley Barry, his face ghastly pale, and trembling with fright, stood before him. Wretched and haggard as the poor boy looked, the sight of him was cheering to the skipper; it was an unexpected blessing to see a friendly face once more.

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"Charley, my boy," he said, kindly, as he tried to hold out to him his fettered hand, "how did you manage to get down to me? I am, indeed, glad to see you again."

"They forgot me, sir," replied the boy, "in all the fighting, and now most of 'em are so drunk they don't take no notice of nothing. Mr. Simpson let 'em have as much rum as they like. The deck's in an awful state. There's Johnson lying dead shot by Jack, many of our men bleeding with their wounds, and all of 'em so bound that they can't move."

"Sad news you bring me, Charley," said the skipper, groaning. "Is Jack much hurt do you think? and what's happened to Mr. Blake?"

"Jack Adams was stunned, sir, but he was a-coming to not long ago, and he's so strong he'd have got loose again, but Mr. Simpson comes up just in time and puts a man with a revolver as guard over Jack, with orders to shoot him if he moves, and then gets two fellows to bind him tighter, and put them things on his hands as you have, sir."

"Poor Jack," said Martin, sadly; "and what do you think Mr. Simpson and these scoundrels mean to do with us? Have you heard anything, Charley?"

"Yes, sir; he's ordered the longboat to be got ready and lowered; all the hands what's stuck to you, together with Mr. Blake, who doesn't seem much hurt, though he's fettered, too, are to be put aboard of her and turned adrift."

"The brutes!" groaned Martin; "we're hundreds of miles from land, in mid-ocean, Simpson knows as well as I do; unless picked up by some passing vessel, the poor fellows 'll perish with hunger, if their boat doesn't founder."

"Is there anything I can do for you, sir?" asked Charley; "now's the time, when the men are drunk and Mr. Simpson is busy, and it's so dark."

"Don't run any risk on my account, my lad," said the

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skipper, "but if you can do it unobserved, go into my cabin, fetch me my small Bible, and two photographs that hang near my bunk; there's nothing else there I want particularly."

"I think I shall be able to do that, sir; your cabin door was open as I passed just now. I don't think, from what I heard, that you're to be put in the boat, sir."

"No," said Martin, bitterly; "I never thought I should; they've some harder fate in store for me. I'm to bear the full brunt of Simpson's vengeance. He has concocted some vile plan to satisfy his malice. May God pardon him."

The boy's eyes filled with tears; he stammered out:

"Oh, sir, I wish I could help you, you've always been so kind to me; I can't bear to see you thus; I wouldn't mind what I suffered, not if Mr. Simpson killed me, if I could get you out of this place."

"You're a good, kind lad, Charley, and have often cheered me in this voyage by the hymns you've sung to me, and the help you've given me in many ways. God bless you and bring you safe home to your mother. We can only help each other now by our prayers, and that's the best way, as I've always told you, my boy; perhaps we sha'n't meet again in this world, but we know we shall in heaven, where the blessed Master we both love will bring us in His own good time. There's a hard time in store for both of us; there are storms and tempests to be passed through; but at the end there's a haven of rest, when all these troubles will be o'er."

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, through his tears. "I think of that when I feel downcast and fearful at what's before me; but, now, sir, I must lose no time if I'm to fetch them things for you."

The boy crept noiselessly along the dark passages, and up to the deck; fortunately Simpson was at the other end of the ship; no one saw him go into the captain's cabin;

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without any difficulty he laid his hands on the Bible and the photographs, and conveyed them safely to Martin in his den.

"Thank you, Charley," he said; "I can't move my hands far — put 'em in my pockets for me. When there's light enough I hope I may be able to get hold of the Bible and hymn-book, so as to read a bit; but if not, I've plenty of texts and hymns stored in my mind, thank God! And now, Charley, you'd better leave me; if you were caught down here by Simpson he'd half kill you. If you get a chance, tell Blake and Jack to keep up their courage and trust in the Lord, and I hope they'll be picked up and brought to some port. We can't say what fate they've reserved for you, lad; but I'd rather you were put off with the rest adrift in the boat than left at Simpson's mercy."

"So would I, sir, if it weren't that if I stay aboard I might be a help to you somehow," replied the boy.

"I fear you wouldn't be able to help me much — Simpson would take care of that," said the captain; "now, good-by, Charley; may God bless you wherever you are."

Charley Barry returned to the deck, but perceiving that Blake, Jack, and the other men were being narrowly watched by Simpson and Andrews, he retired to the forecastle and lay down in his bunk.

In the morning, when the men had for the most part slept off their drunken bout, Simpson ordered them to lower the longboat; Jack, Blake, and five other men who had proved themselves faithful to the captain, still bound, were roughly thrown on board; remonstrance was of no avail, resistance impossible. Simpson made little excuse for this act of barbarity; he said the captain, if he were not a madman, had shown himself of so violent and vindictive a temper that it was not safe for him to retain the command; he had murdered one of his crew in cold blood; no seaman's life was secure for a moment under such a skipper! He, therefore, as chief officer, had felt it his duty to assume

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the command of the ship as the only way of quelling the mutiny which had been aroused by the captain's cruelty alone. In this the majority of the crew supported him.

Those who had aided and abetted the skipper might prove themselves dangerous shipmates, for they refused to recognize the chief mate as master, or to obey him. He could not do otherwise, therefore, than turn them adrift. Simpson's real motive was to get rid of every man who would bear witness to the truth of the recent events on board. The captain was to be kept in confinement till England was reached, when he would be delivered up to justice and accused of murder by Simpson and the scoundrels who composed his crew.

To give an appearance of fairness to his dastardly proceeding, Simpson had ordered the boat to be provisioned; the store on board would last the men for ten days or a fortnight. There was, of course, a chance that they might be picked up by a passing vessel, but very little hope that, cast adrift in mid ocean, they would ever in so frail a bark succeed in making land. Simpson argued that under any circumstances they could not reach England till long after the "Queen of the West," so that he would have plenty of time to carry out his iniquitous scheme before their arrival.

"You'll have to answer for your conduct one day, Simpson, so sure as there's a God in heaven," said Blake, solemnly, as he was forced by the men over the side into the boat; "you mean that we should all perish — may be we shall not; some one 'll rise up against you, and declare the truth. Such a cowardly scoundrel as you 'll never be allowed by the Almighty to go unpunished."

Simpson winced, but made no reply; the other men loaded him with reproaches and loud execrations. Jack was the most outspoken of any in his threats and denunciations. The men had no easy job to get him into the boat, so desperate were his struggles; he had succeeded

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by a violent effort in freeing his hands, and dealt tremendous blows on all sides; but even he had to yield to the force of numbers, and at last fell exhausted at the bottom of the boat.

Roused by the noise, the wild shouts, and the fearful oaths of the men, Charley Barry left his berth and returned to the deck, where he was very soon observed by Simpson.

"Throw that young cub into the boat," he cried to the men; "the sooner he's drowned the better."

"He'll be the first of 'em to starve," replied Andrews, with an oath, as the poor lad was hurled over the side.

Immediately after the rope which bound her to the ship was cut, and the boat was turned adrift amid the shouts of triumph, wild laughter, and terrible oaths of the villains who crowded the sides of the vessel.

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CHAPTER XXV.

IN THE DEPTHS.

"One adequate support
For the calamities of mortal life
Exists, one only: an assured belief
That the procession of our fate, howe'er
Sad or disturbed, is ordered by a Being
Of infinite benevolence and power;
Whose everlasting purposes embrace
All accidents, converting them to good."
— WORDSWORTH.

MARTIN in his den in the hold heard all this noise on deck, now and then being able to distinguish the voices of Jack and others of his friends. From the information given him by Charley, he could pretty well guess what was going on. Blake and the rest were plainly enough being forced into the boat, while he sat ironed and handcuffed, unable to render the slightest assistance to the brave fellows who were condemned by these ruffians to perish by hunger or a watery grave, because they had done their duty and remained faithful. And he was alone there — alone in the midst of his enemies; he had not a single friend on board now, not one who would say a kind word to him, unless the boy Charley had not been sent with the others; for the lad's sake he would far rather he was cast adrift with friendly men than exposed to the cruel persecutions of the vindictive and cowardly Simpson. His position could hardly be worse; he felt almost inclined to despair. The tempter indeed whispered now and then in his ear, "Where is

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now thy God?" Had his Father in heaven, Who had hitherto watched over him and delivered him in so many great dangers, indeed forsaken him? Had He hid His face from him in anger, had He said to his foes, "Persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him." He had brought him very low, into a place of darkness and the deep, but a still small voice within told him that God would never leave him nor forsake him, and that though heaviness might endure for a night, joy cometh in the morning. Conscience plainly whispered that he had done his duty. To God belonged the issues of life and death; he could only cry with the Psalmist, "In thee, O Lord, do I put my trust; let me never be ashamed; deliver me in Thy righteousness . . . Pull me out of the net that they have laid privily for me; for Thou art my strength." In the midst of his affliction he tried to fix his thoughts on the sufferings which his Blessed Master had borne for him. In Him he saw not only an example whom he would humbly endeavor to follow, but a Saviour, too, Who was ready to hold out a helping hand to all who turned to Him in their trouble and distress. He prayed fervently, not for himself only, but for his poor shipmates so cruelly turned adrift on the wide ocean, whose lives were hanging on so slender a thread,—the mere chance of being picked up by a passing sail. Neither did he forget to pray for his enemies, that God would turn their hearts; that before it was too late they might see the evil of their ways, repent, and turn to Him Who is ever willing to receive and ready to pardon all sinners who come to Him in humble penitence and sorrow.

Meanwhile, on deck, Simpson having got rid of all who were likely to oppose him in his iniquitous plans, or to divulge the truth of the transactions on board during the last few days, was feeling much more at ease. At last he had attained the summit of his ambition; everything had prospered; though he had taken no open part in the mu-

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tiny, yet he had been the man to profit the most by it. He was now master of the ship; all must bend to his will; his mortal enemy was completely in his power. Little did he think, when they sailed out of Melbourne, that his most sanguine hopes would so soon be realized.

However, when the first flush of success was over, and he began to reflect more calmly on his position, he could not altogether dismiss from his mind some awkward questions which every now and then suggested themselves. He knew that his crew could not be relied upon in an emergency. There were very few experienced seamen among them, the majority being landsmen. What would happen if they had another gale as furious as the last? Could he depend on the men working in such a case? Would they yield him the implicit obedience they had refused to Captain Archer? If they mutinied against him, how should he act? On whom could he depend? Frankly he must reply that he could not trust a man on board. It was only a common hatred to Martin that had bound them together. He felt that it was by flattery, bribery, and fair promises alone that he would be able to manage his unruly crew. He almost regretted that he had turned the other men adrift; they were all experienced seamen. It would have been better to have confined them in the hold and released them if their services were required. Their own sense of self-preservation would have made them do their duty, while they were not numerous enough to regain the upper hand and restore the captive skipper. Well! perhaps he had made a mistake, but it was too late now to amend the mischief; he must make the best of it.

He appointed Tozer to act as chief mate, and a man named Parker, who possessed the same qualification of being really a seaman, second mate. The men were arranged in watches, and a double ration of rum was served out to them in honor of the new captain and the success of the mutiny.

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The sky was clear; the mercury was high, and indicated a continuance of the fine weather. A strong but favorable breeze was carrying them with swelling canvas over the dark-blue waters. The hands, though awkward and inclined to be lazy, worked quite as well as Simpson had anticipated. For the present their demands were satisfied; they had gained all they desired. Many of them, Tozer especially, demanded summary vengeance on the captain; but Simpson, initiating them into the wicked plot which he had formed against his enemy, persuaded them to wait for the revenge, which would be both surer and sweeter when it came, though it might be long delayed.

As to Martin, he was left alone in his close, gloomy den. Food was brought him twice a day by the colored cook. Simpson was too great a coward to visit him himself, for his conscience told him he could not stand Martin's well-deserved reproaches. Sambo, the cook, who had been taught by his mates to look on the late captain as a monster and a murderer, at first hastily left him his food without saying a word, but on the second day, touched by Martin's patience and resignation, he expressed sympathy for him in his sorry plight, and asked if he could do anything to help him. Martin, surprised and grateful at the sudden change in the man's behavior, thanked him warmly, asked him to take off his handcuffs, and, if he could do so without observation, to fetch him a small lamp which he had in his cabin, and some matches. He hoped thus to be able to see to read occasionally, and, as he had his pipe and tobacco-pouch in his pocket, to have a smoke now and then. Sambo at once removed the handcuffs, and the irons on his feet as well. He asked him to put the latter on again if there seemed any chance of Simpson paying him a visit, so as not to get him into a scrape, and he would leave the key of the prison inside, so that Martin could lock the door if he heard any one coming, till he was prepared to let them in. As to the lamp, he would do his best to get it, but as

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Simpson had taken possession of the captain's cabin, he was afraid he could not take anything out now.

That Simpson should install himself in the captain's cabin was natural enough, but Martin had not realized it till now. There was a good deal of valuable property there — important papers, the ship's log, and Jack's box, containing his nugget. Simpson had already proved himself such a villain that Martin felt sure nothing would be safe that came into his hands. Here was another bitter drop in his cup of sorrow. When Sambo next brought him his food he produced the lamp and matches; he had gone into the cabin when Simpson was at the other end of the ship, and as there was already another lamp there he did not think he would miss it. Martin, after thanking him, inquired how matters were going on above. He learned then the truth of what he previously guessed, — how his friends had all been turned adrift, of the promotion of Tozer and Parker, and how for the present comparative order and discipline reigned in the ship, Simpson being recognized and obeyed as master.

He was very thankful for the measure of comfort afforded him by the kindly Sambo; it was something to have the handcuffs removed, which chafed his wrists, and the heavy irons off his legs, so that he could move about in his wretched den, narrow as it was; but the lamp was the greatest boon of all. Now he could read his Bible and Prayer-book, and take a look at Kate's portrait, though not with the unmixed joy he had formerly done: a dark shadow now came between him and his betrothed.

He opened his father's Bible, — how many thoughts of past days, happy and sad, did it bring up into his mind! He looked back on his brave, consistent life, so devoted to duty, to which at last he died a martyr. All the events of that terrible night and day off Margate returned with vividness to his memory, — how sickness brought him low almost to the grave, and how tenderly and devotedly he

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had been nursed by Jack Adams. Would he ever see that faithful friend again? Earnestly did he pray that he and those embarked with him in the frail boat might weather the storms to which they would surely be exposed, till they found refuge on board some passing ship.

As to himself and his own future, — well, it was, humanly speaking, a poor lookout, indeed. But he left that entirely in God's hands; whatever He did must be for the best, as the result would show. He turned to his hymn-book; his eye fell upon many a well-known verse he had so often sung as a chorister in church at Plymouth, and the familiar tunes seemed to sound in his ears. In the words of one which had always been a great favorite with him he found peculiar comfort:—

"Lord Jesus, think on me,
With many a care opprest;
Let me Thy loving servant be,
And taste Thy promised rest.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
Nor let me go astray;
Through darkness and perplexity
Point Thou the heavenly way.

Lord Jesus, think on me,
That when the flood is passed,
I may the eternal brightness see,
And share Thy joy at last."

These words, as well as many similar ones, brought him no little comfort; he was able even to praise God in his dreary prison. He slept that night well and soundly, and awoke much refreshed in the morning.

Meanwhile, on deck, Simpson was beginning to experience that to command a ship was no easy post, especially when she is short-handed and manned by landlubbers and lazy fellows. Though the crew did not refuse to work they performed their duties in a slovenly, half-hearted way. The new first mate had celebrated his promotion by get-

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ting drunk, and for a whole day was fit for nothing. When the captain remonstrated he was told to mind his own business. Angry words passed between them. The second mate, who had never been in any position of authority before, began by tyrannizing over the men, swearing at and threatening them. They replied that he was no better than themselves, and that they were not going to be ordered about by him. Thus it might easily be foreseen that anarchy and confusion would soon reign on board the "Queen of the West." Simpson's heart failed him when he thought of what must happen if foul weather came on, as come it would ere long if the now rapidly falling mercury was to be trusted. He did his best to keep the men in good humor by extra rations of rum. He urged them to do their best in working the ship, as unless they did, with such a small and inexperienced crew, they would probably founder if a gale came on. They were a long way from England yet, and it would not suit their purpose to put in at any port by the way, because at all the ports of call Messrs. Willis & Dobbs had agents who would be on the lookout for the ship, were well acquainted with the captain, and would probably make awkward inquiries and detain them till they were satisfactorily answered, or they received instructions from Plymouth. By these means Simpson managed to keep up some discipline and order, though high words and quarrels which ended in blows were of almost daily occurrence. When the expected change in the weather came and the sea ran high, the sails were reefed with difficulty, and one was torn to shreds by the force of the wind. The new boatswain whistled in vain to the men, who soon got bewildered, many of them hesitating, and others positively refusing to go aloft. Simpson himself had to work far harder than he had ever done when serving under Martin. He realized now that he had no easy berth; he almost repented his treachery and ill-judged ambition. But it was too late to change

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now: he must make the best of matters and get the ship to Plymouth, if possible.

The black cook kept Martin well informed of the state of affairs; he became, too, every day more friendly and communicative. He informed him how hardly he was treated by Simpson and Tozer, receiving blows and kicks if their meals were not served to their satisfaction. When the gale came on he was much alarmed, and told Martin that with such a crew he feared they would all go to the bottom.

In the middle of the night he came to him in great consternation. The ship was laboring heavily under bare poles; furious seas were sweeping the decks; most of the men had deserted their posts, and were drinking in the forecastle, having obliged the captain by threats of violence to serve out a large quantity of rum to them. Simpson, he said, was at his wits' end; he seemed to have lost his head, and was pale and trembling with fear.

Martin listened to all this with perfect calmness. His own condition could not be much worse than it was. He did not know what fate his enemies had in store for him; and he would as soon perish in the waters as by their cruel hands. Still, his sense of duty, and his desire that the ship and cargo might be preserved for the owners, made him hope she might weather this gale, to which end he longed to give a helping hand.

The cook left him, promising to return if he had anything fresh to communicate, and he was left again to his own sad thoughts. Every now and then the ship quivered from stem to stern, and Martin was thrown violently from side to side in his narrow prison, as the heavy seas beat on her and swept the decks with a roar which penetrated even to his gloomy cell.

Sambo had not been gone more than a quarter of an hour when he saw a light through the chinks of the door; he was coming back, then, with some more bad news. The

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door opened, and Simpson, pale as death, trembling from head to foot, and holding a lamp in his unsteady hand, stood before him. He seemed too terrified to speak. Martin broke the silence.

"What is the matter, Mr. Simpson? What brings you here?" he said, calmly.

"Well, Captain Archer," he stuttered, "matters are going very badly on deck; most of the hands have left their posts, not a man will obey me; it's blowing almost a hurricane, and the sea's running fearfully high. I'm come to ask you if you will lend a hand, and give us your help. You'll say I'm not the one to ask you after the way I've behaved; but it wasn't my fault. I'm quite in the hands of these men; and in fact you owe your life to me, for they'd have murdered you in cold blood or chucked you overboard if I hadn't prevented it."

"You needn't waste time in making explanations about your conduct, Simpson," said Martin; "you're responsible to higher powers than to me for that. Tell me plainly what you want me to do."

"To come on deck, Mr. Archer, to restore some order and discipline; and if you can't do that, to give us a hand in managing the ship."

"I'm quite willing, Simpson," replied Martin; "but who's to be master? And do you suppose for a moment those drunken ruffians, who you say thirst for my blood, will obey me? You haven't got a steady man on board the ship; you've cast adrift all who were good for anything. If any of us see land again it will be only through God's providence."

Simpson said nothing; terror had quite subdued him; he led the way up the companion. It was a dreary prospect which met their eyes when they reached the deck. The ship was laboring heavily; the decks were ankle-deep in water, being continually swept by the huge waves which dashed over the vessel. Here and there men were crouch-

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ing under the bulwarks, or clinging on to anything which could afford them protection against being swept into the sea. Terror and dismay might be read on all faces. Martin perceived at once that the ship's course must be altered if she was to bear up successfully against the gale.

"I'll take the helm myself, Simpson," said he; and suiting the action to the word, he went up to the wheel and took it out of the hands of the man who was steering, and was glad enough to be relieved.

The news soon spread over the ship that Simpson, unable to navigate the ship in the gale, had had recourse to the extreme measure of releasing Captain Archer. The majority of the men, who were trembling for their lives, saw in his return some hope of deliverance; the more desperate swore and murmured at his recall, while all agreed that Simpson had proved his own incompetence to command a ship. He was laughed at and despised in consequence. The strong instinct of self-preservation, added to the power which a man of stern will and thorough straightforwardness exercises over the timid and dissolute, induced many of the crew to yield to Martin an obedience they had refused to Simpson. They felt that in executing his commands lay their sole chance of safety. Tozer and a few others remained in the forecastle, and refused to stir. Simpson's promises and entreaties could not move them. They treated him with the contempt which he deserved.

All night did Martin work as hard as any common sailor. Now he was at the wheel directing the ship's course, now hastening along the deck giving his orders to the men, now in the cuddy poring over the charts. Simpson rendered him every assistance in his power. Already the ship was riding less heavily on the wild waste of waters, and confidence was in a great measure restored.

For two more days the tempest continued to rage with very little abatement, during which time Martin got scarcely

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any rest; he could only now and then snatch an hour's repose by lying down in the cuddy, leaving strict orders that he was to be summoned if there was any change in the wind or weather.

Simpson still kept possession of the captain's cabin. There was very little communication between him and Martin; the latter wondered what fate was in store for him when fair weather returned.

And now the gale gradually abated; the mercury rising steadily foretold a spell of calm weather. The men who had been sulking in the forecastle, and never lent a hand during the storm, emerged from their retreat, and, headed by Tozer, immediately demanded an extra ration of rum. Their threatening air and determined looks at once intimidated Simpson, who instantly granted their request. Tozer then inquired, with the coolest impertinence, why the late captain had been released, and if it was Simpson's pleasure that he should be restored to his old post, because, if so, he for one wasn't going to obey him. Simpson replied that he had had him up because he was short of hands, and they could not afford to have an able-bodied man on board doing nothing.

"All right, master," replied Tozer, "then let him work like a common sailor; put him in my watch, and I'll take care that he does his duty."

"Well, we'll see about that, Tozer," replied Simpson, "but you can make yourself easy on one score—he won't be master of this ship again, so long as I'm here."

Simpson was in no little dilemma now what to do with his old rival and enemy. He would gladly have put him in confinement again, but he felt that the ship had already been saved through his help, and that if it blew hard again he would only have to recall him on deck and place himself in the same humiliating position towards him as he had done before.

Bad as Simpson was, and deeply as he hated Martin, he

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could hardly make up his mind to agree to Tozer's proposal, whose enmity to Martin was of so deep and violent a nature that he feared lest he might murder him in a fit of passion, an action which would have awkward consequences, and would not suit the end he had in view. Next morning he told Martin surlily that he had made up his mind he should not go back to his prison; they could not afford to have any idle hands on board; he must obey his orders and work like the other men. He put him into the second's mate's watch, to keep him and Tozer apart as much as possible.

Martin bore this fresh indignity with his usual calmness. For many reasons he preferred work to the confinement in the hold. He felt he could do more to preserve the ship and cargo in his present position, though he foresaw how hard it would be to bear the insults and scoffs of his former subordinates, now his equals, and some of them his superiors. He prayed for strength to bear meekly the future trials and sufferings which were plainly in store for him. He knew that resistance would be vain, and only aggravate his position. Of the ultimate fate reserved for him he was still ignorant, but felt that his life was hanging on a mere thread; an outburst of passion on the part of the ruffians who formed the crew, or the vindictive desire to gratify individual spite, might at any moment send him into eternity. While he worked, therefore, hard and willingly with his hands, his heart was fixed on heavenly things; with deep penitence he looked back on the faults and sins of his life, that he might be prepared to meet his God when the last hour came.

The weather now continued fair. Under ordinary circumstances they would have called at Cape Town, but, as we have before stated, Simpson had good reason for avoiding those ports where Messrs. Willis & Dobbs had agents. They therefore sailed past the Cape. The only man who showed any kindness to Martin was Sambo, and he

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only did so on the sly, when he was certain not to be observed.

Simpson treated his former captain with a sort of surly contempt; the other men, hounded on by Tozer, heaped every insult and indignity upon him. He was put to the meanest and most degrading work, kept aloft for hours in the bitterest cold, cuffed and kicked by brutal fellows, some of whom were escaped convicts or drunken rascals who, having failed in the colony in everything they had put their hands to, had taken this opportunity of getting a free passage to England, by palming themselves off as sailors. It was only by keeping constantly before his eyes the image of his great Example, by remembering his meek and patient Saviour, who for his sake had suffered the shameful death of the cross, that Martin was able to bear up under this long period of bitter trial. Insult and injury to himself he bore without a murmur, but when he heard his blessed Master's name taken in vain with horrid blasphemy, and religion mocked and scoffed at, it was too much for him, — his blood boiled within him, and he could not help remonstrating; he felt compelled to stand up for what he held to be dearer than life itself. This only drew down upon him fresh insults, blows, and every kind of persecution. His whole life and conduct being a silent protest against their own wickedness more and more incensed these men against him. Simpson alone, though with no good motive, often kept them back from murdering him outright.

The "Queen of the West" encountered no very severe weather on her voyage from the Cape to Plymouth. Had she met with any serious gale the chances would have been against her; no discipline was maintained on board, and the crew were generally more or less intoxicated. Poor Martin was the only man who really worked hard, but he was becoming utterly worn-out and emaciated. He was a mass of bruises from head to foot: it was looked upon as

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fair game for every man to give him a blow without the slightest provocation. The handsome young skipper who had left Plymouth eighteen months ago in command of the finest ship owned by Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, with such apparently happy prospects, would hardly have been recognized now by his most intimate friend in the pale, hollow-cheeked, ragged sailor, who seemed to have scarcely sufficient strength to climb the rigging or to reef a sail.

Simpson had thoroughly organized his plot. All the crew were his associates. Martin's doom, they felt, was sealed if they all acted together and kept their promises. The day before the "Queen of the West" reached Plymouth Sound, Captain Archer was again consigned to his gloomy prison in the hold. He did not altogether understand this move on the part of his persecutors. It gave him, however, some rest after the constant hard work to which he had for so many weeks been exposed. It enabled him also calmly to review the past, and to prepare himself for the trials of the future. Sambo again proved himself a friend in need. By the light of the lamp which he provided for him Martin was able to solace himself with his books. God, indeed, had brought him very low, to the extremest depths of degradation and misery, but he felt in all his trouble that He had some wise purpose in thus trying his faith, and was able to feel confidently the truth of His promise, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on Thee, because he trusteth in Thee."

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CHAPTER XXVI.

CAST ADRIFT.

"I looked to heaven and tried to pray;
But or ever a prayer had gushed,
A wicked whisper came and made
My heart as dry as dust.
I closed my lids and kept them close,
And the balls like pulses beat;
For the sky and the sea, and the sea and the sky,
Lay like a load on my weary eye,
And the dead were at my feet."

— COLERIDGE: ANCIENT MARINER.

"How pleasant are thy paths, O Death!
Like the bright slanting west,
Thou leadest down into the glow
Where all those heaven-bound sunsets go,
Ever from toil to rest."

— FABER.

THE boat in which the seven men and the boy Charley Barry were cast adrift by the mutineers was rapidly borne by the waves far away from the "Queen of the West." Muttered groans and curses escaped from the men as she vanished from their sight: she seemed to carry with her all hope of life, all chance of ever seeing home and friends again. They sat motionless in the boat; the oars remained untouched; a sullen despair appeared to have taken possession of them all. In the hearts of some the feeling of anger and revenge was uppermost. To have been overcome by such a set of villains, to know that the ship and her captain were at their mercy, was alike humiliating and bitterly mortifying. And they could do nothing to bring

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those rascals to justice, nothing to satisfy their revenge! It was a long time before any of them spoke except to utter imprecations. Blake was the first to break the silence.

"Mates," he said, "we sha'n't mend matters by sitting here with our hands before us, doing nothing. I don't mean to say that ours isn't a poor lookout; still, seven men, all strong and hearty, shouldn't give up their lives without an effort."

"You never spoke a truer word, sir," said the boatswain. "I've heard of many who've been worse off than we are, and yet have got safe to port."

"Yes, that may be, boatswain," said one of the men, "but not cast adrift so far from land as we are."

"It isn't land we must be on the lookout for, Jim," said Blake, "but passing ships. I know we're in their course, and all our eyes must be strained to hail them."

"It would have been better if that brute Simpson had murdered us outright," said Jack, sullenly, "than leave us to die by slow torture of hunger and thirst, as we're sure to, now."

"Come, Jack, cheer up a bit!" replied Blake; "I see through Simpson's game plain enough: his plea will be that he cast us adrift because we mutinied, and we were too many and too strong to be kept on board, even in confinement. No doubt he hopes we shall never turn up again, but let's do our best to baulk his schemes by getting back to old England somehow, and letting folks there know the truth about this rascally business."

"Ay, ay, sir," said the boatswain; "come, lads, cheer up, and we may get the better of that scoundrel yet;" while, suiting the action to the words, and with the intention of setting an example to the others, he made his way to the stern, shipped the rudder, and took the tiller in his hand.

This roused the other men from their despondency; one by one they took up the oars and dipped them into the sea.

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"Bravo, lads, that's something like now!" said Blake, cheerily. "I'm sure our good skipper would say, if he were here, that God 'd never allow us to perish, because we did what was right and stuck to our duty."

"Yes, that's just what Captain Archer would say," remarked Jack as he seized an oar, "and perhaps I know his opinions as well as any of you, having sailed with him for several voyages, and been shipwrecked with him, too."

"I'm sure he would," echoed Charley, in a voice choked with sobs.

"Why, Charley, lad, I'd quite forgotten you," said Blake; "now I remember how those brutes chucked you overboard. Well, keep up your courage, boy,—you're out of Simpson's clutches, at all events."

"Yes, sir," replied the boy, "still, for all that, I'd rather be aboard, for I might be of some help to the captain."

"Simpson 'd take precious good care you weren't," said Jack; "you're better off with us. I'll look after you, Charley; it never shall be said that Jack Adams wouldn't do his best for such a friend of Captain Archer's as you've been."

"Thank you, Jack," said Charley, sadly, "you've always been a kind friend to me, I know."

"And always shall be," answered Jack.

"Come, mates," said Blake, "we'll just overhaul our stock of provisions and calculate how long they'll last us; but I'll have a look at the compass first, just to take our bearings, and settle on our course."

"We've already drifted far away from the ship," said the boatswain; "she's a mere speck in the distance; we shall soon lose sight of her altogether."

"If it weren't that our captain was aboard her, I'd wish she might sink with all her cursed crew," said Jack, with an oath.

"Don't talk like that, Jack," said Charley, as he put his hand on his arm; "our skipper has often told me we should

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never wish evil to anyone, but trust them to God's mercy. Our Lord taught us to pray for our enemies."

"Come, come, Charley, don't preach," said Jack; "our skipper is an uncommon good man, but I never could go with him in all his Methodist fancies."

"But Jack," said Charley, decidedly, "he never were a Methodist at all, but a thorough good Churchman all his life."

"Well, it's all the same thing what I mean," said Jack, "putting his religion before everything else, though I must say this, he never forced it down other people's throats, as I've seen some do."

When they had taken their bearings, they looked over their stock of provisions. If they were very sparing of them they had enough to last for about fifteen days. They dreaded most lest the supply of water should run short; if any rain fell they must take means to catch some to add to their store.

The weather was fine, the sea fairly smooth. As there was a breeze they profited by it to hoist the sail, and spare themselves the toil of rowing. By nightfall most of them were in better spirits, and looked more hopefully forward to the future; as they smoked their pipes they talked almost cheerfully, while they eagerly scanned the vast expanse of sea around, in hopes of discovering the sail of some passing vessel. Some of the men were suffering from the effects of the wounds and bruises they had received in the late conflict on board the "Queen of the West." Jack had received a terrible cut on the head, which caused him great pain. Charley had done his best to bind up the wound, and Jack, though he was suffering a good deal, tried to make light of it. However, he couldn't get much sleep that night, for he felt sick and feverish.

Next morning the sun rose like a great ball of fire from the cloudless horizon. The sea was calmer even than yesterday, but there was still enough breeze for them to use

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the sail. Blake carefully measured out the scanty rations for breakfast, and when some of the men grumbled at getting so little, he and the boatswain spoke again of the stern necessity of making their small stock last as long as possible. It was impossible to tell, if their boat was preserved from foundering, how long they would be compelled to remain in her, or how many days or weeks might elapse before they fell in with a passing vessel.

The murmurers saw the sense of this, for, though ignorant, they were reasonable men, and yielded obedience to Blake as their superior officer.

As the sun rose in the heavens the heat became intolerable; the breeze fell, too, and the men were obliged to take to their oars. All suffered terribly from thirst, which the very small ration of rum-and-water supplied to each was quite insufficient to allay.

Jack's wound caused him acute pain; he lay down at the bottom of the boat, every now and then groaning piteously. Charley did all in his power to soothe and comfort him. The intensely hot day was followed by a sultry evening. They were all more or less depressed; the boatswain's efforts to cheer them were in vain. Then from a heavy bank of clouds to the eastward there came a vivid flash of lightning, soon followed by a heavy clap of thunder, the precursors of a violent storm, during which sea and sky seemed to be intermingled in the incessant flood of violet light which illuminated both, while the thunder roared without intermission. Then the rain came. It fell in torrents, — in great sheets of water, — almost wetting the men to the skin before they could get their oilskins on, but it was a blessed godsend to them; they caught a great deal in the sail which they stretched out for the purpose, as well as in every vessel, large or small, they had in the boat. Charley got a good supply wherewith to bathe Jack's head, and soak the cloths which he wrapped round it. The storm had cleared the air, and the spirits of all the poor fellows in the boat re-

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vived marvellously. When the rain ceased a fresh breeze sprang up, and with their sail set they made rapid progress during the night. Jack, who for the first time had got a few hours' sleep, was much better in the morning. His head, thanks to Charley's care, gave him less pain now.

"Thank you, Charley, my boy, for looking after me," he said as he raised himself up in the boat; "you'd make a first-rate nurse; I'd have been much worse if it hadn't been for you. But you look pale and tired, lad; you've been attending to me all night and got no sleep yourself; that won't do, — you must have a bit of rest now."

"Never mind me, Jack, I ain't sleepy," replied the boy, "I'm so glad you're better."

Jack insisted on Charley's lying down in the bottom of the boat; he saw how all the excitement, fatigue, and exhaustion of the last few days had told on the boy, who, as being a favorite of Martin's, he was determined to make his special charge. He took off his jacket and spread it over him, and he very soon fell asleep. That day passed very much as the previous one, and so did the five succeeding days. The weather continued fine, the sun was burning hot in the day, occasional showers cooled the air, but no sail as yet had gladdened the eyes of the anxious crew. Their spirits sank daily; they became moody and depressed; Blake and the boatswain had hard work to keep up the courage of their despondent mates. Curses upon Simpson and the mutineers were frequently raised, mingled with threats of vengeance if they ever saw land again — a hope which was growing fainter and fainter every day.

They suffered increasingly from thirst; scanty rations of dry biscuit, with now and then, as a treat, a little salt pork, was their only food. On the eighth day one of the men showed signs of scurvy, that peculiar pest of the sailor on the ocean when deprived of vegetable diet; there was no lime-juice in the boat, — no remedy at hand to arrest the disease. Jack observed with bitter anxiety how Charley

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grew paler and weaker every day; he would stint himself very often and induce the boy to eat a portion of his share of the provisions in addition to his own, pretending that it was some he had left over from the previous day, but the trick soon failed, for Charley now began to lose all appetite, and Jack had great difficulty to get him to eat a morsel. But the boy never complained; not a murmur escaped his lips; when he spoke it was to thank Jack for his kindness, or to ask the question uppermost in all their minds, — if they had seen a sail? He lay for the most part in the bottom of the boat, his head resting against Jack's knees, when his friend was not employed in rowing or attending to the sail.

Ten days had passed since they had been cast adrift, ten weary days of anxious suspense, during which despair was gaining the mastery over hope. Even the boatswain, the most sanguine of the party, found it hard to say a cheering word. Blake sat with the tiller in his hand, mute, with deep lines of care graven on his gloomy face; the sick man lay at the bottom of the boat, now and then uttering a piteous groan, for he was getting worse every hour, and suffered intensely. Charley, with wan, pinched face and closed eyes, was sitting on the thwart next to Jack, his head resting on his friend's shoulder. In Jack's eyes there was a look of savage despair. The sky was covered with thick clouds, the wind, too, was rising, there was every appearance of a change of weather. All strained their eyes more eagerly than ever over the rugged waste of waters which encircled them, to discern the so ardently longed for white speck which alone could bring them deliverance. But no ray of comfort shone upon those poor toil-worn, desponding mariners from either desolate sea or murky sky. Utterly drear and comfortless was the prospect. Towards evening, with the wind still rising and an ever-threatening sky, there happened what has so frequently occurred to men in the same terrible circumstances. Just before sunset, as

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Jack, who had laid Charley down in the boat and made him as comfortable as he could for the night, stood up on the thwart, and clinging to the mast with his right arm, and shading his eyes with his left hand, took a keen glance round — it was acknowledged by all his mates that he had the longest sight of any of them, so was always put on the lookout — after scanning the horizon on all sides, his gaze remained fixed to the northward, and those watching him saw how his whole frame quivered with excitement, but he did not speak.

"What is it, Jack?" said Blake, eagerly, "do you see anything? Don't keep us in suspense."

"Wait a minute, sir; I don't want to deceive you."

There was silence for a couple of minutes, which seemed to the men like an hour; then Jack exclaimed, —

"Yes, mates, I'm not wrong — it *is* a sail out there, — look! look! to the nor'ward."

They all sprang up and gazed eagerly in the direction pointed out by Jack. The boatswain and another man saw the sail distinctly; the others were not able to make it out.

From the depths of despair those poor fellows now rose to the wildest and most confident hopes. They fancied they were saved already; it did not seem to enter their heads that they were too far off for those on board the ship to see them, and that night was rapidly coming on.

"Don't raise your hopes too high, mates," said Blake, seriously, "it may be that we shall be disappointed, and then we shall feel worse than ever. Just think that in a few minutes it'll be quite dark, and that the crew of that 'ere ship can't make us out as we do their vessel, because we're so small."

"Mr. Blake's right there," said the boatswain; "though we may take heart again, we mustn't make too sure."

"But in the morning they're certain to see us," said Jack.

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"They'll sail much faster than we can, remember, and with a fair wind may be out of sight when morning dawns."

Meanwhile it had grown quite dark; there was every prospect, too, of a dirty night — the wind was rising, the boat rolled and pitched more than she had done yet; the crew had no little difficulty in keeping her head to the wind, they shipped sea after sea, and were drenched to the skin, but, nerved by a confident and eager hope, the poor fellows worked harder at the oars than ever, and seemed little to heed the fresh danger they were exposed to from the rising gale. All longed for the dawn, which they expected would bring them the hoped-for deliverance. But when the full light of day, gray and cheerless, rose on the wild and savage scene, on the vast mounds of water crested with foam around them, and when they were borne up to the top of some huge billow, and Jack stood on the lookout, not a sign of the sail of yesterday could be seen. Some of the men at once passed into sullen despair; others argued that the vessel could not be seen, because, owing to the gale, she had taken in all her canvas; to keep up the spirits of their mates, Blake and the boatswain encouraged this idea, although they felt sure the ship had never seen them, and, continuing on her course with a fair wind, was now far away out of sight.

As the day wore on the men grew more and more despondent. They had to use all their skill and strain every nerve to prevent the boat being swamped. Few words were spoken, for their hearts were too heavy for them to say much; and they had to work so hard to save their lives and the boat that there was time for little else. Towards evening the sky grew clearer, and the night which followed, though it was an anxious one enough, was not so fraught with danger as the previous one. How terribly haggard and toil-worn were the faces of the men when the sun rose next morning! Without food, without sleep, they

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had been battling for two days and two nights with the raging elements, while all hope of saving their lives was rapidly vanishing.

Jack bent over Charley, who lay motionless at the bottom of the boat. The boy opened his eyes, and turned them affectionately upon his protector.

"How are you, lad?" asked Jack, kindly.

"I'm very weak, Jack," he replied. "I know I've not much longer to live. I've been thinking about death and the home beyond the sky all night."

"Cheer up, Charley," said Jack, in a tone of encouragement. "You're not going to die yet—you're too young for that. Come, take a drop of something, and try and eat a morsel, and you'll be better."

"No, thank you, Jack, I can't eat any more; I can't swallow, as I told you yesterday. I've thought it all over. I hope I'm ready to die, and that for Jesus Christ's sake God will forgive me all my sins, and receive me into His kingdom."

"There's never been a better or a steadier lad than you, Charley; you can't have many sins to trouble you, as us bad chaps have. But don't talk of dying; perhaps we'll get picked up to-day after all."

"I hope you will, Jack; but I sha'n't live to see it; and don't call me good, for I ain't, indeed; I am a sinner like anybody else, and need to have all my sins washed away in my Saviour's blood."

Jack said nothing, but the tears started to his eyes. Then turning to Blake, he remarked—

"The poor young chap's very bad, and I don't see what we can do for him."

"Ay! he looks so, indeed," replied Blake; "and as to poor Tom, he's been groaning and sighing enough to make one's heart break. He can't last much longer."

"That brute Simpson, and those cursed rascals on board our ship!" said Jack, with an oath. "If there is a right-

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eous God in heaven, as our skipper and the religious folk say, why does He leave us to perish, who did our duty, and let them sail away all safe in the ship?"

"Yes, that does seem strange," said Blake; "but we can't be sure, Jack, that they are so safe. Perhaps we're better off here, at the mercy of the waves, than in the power of such a set of scoundrels."

Charley turned his head, and looked up at Jack as if he wished to say something. He bent over him.

"I heard what you said just now, Jack. It'll all come right in the end; God won't forsake those who do their duty and trust in Him. Why don't you believe in Him, Jack?"

"Ah! I'm a bad fellow, Charley, who never gave much thought to religion, except when I was shut up so much with our good captain at Margate, or when I've been sick in a hospital; and latterly I've been worse than ever. No man could have led a wilder life than I did in those diggings, drinking, and fighting, and other things. God 'll never forgive me, I'm sure."

"Yes, He will, indeed, Jack; if you're really sorry, and pray Him to pardon you for Jesus Christ's sake. It was for sinners that He came down here to die, Jack."

"So I've heard the captain often say, and I used to think, when he talked to me like that, perhaps I had a chance; but since all that's happened in the last few months I know I haven't any at all."

"Raise me up, Jack," said Charley; "I haven't long to be with you, and I've so much I want to say, and I get weaker and weaker."

Jack took the boy up gently in his arms, resting his head as comfortably as he could upon his shoulder; then he put his ear close to the lad's lips so as to catch all he said in his faint dying voice.

"You've been a good friend to me, Jack, ever since I came aboard the 'Queen of the West,' and since we've been

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cast adrift in this 'ere boat as kind as a brother to me. There's one or two things I want you to promise to do for me if you don't mind."

"All right, Charley, I'll promise anything you like, if it's in my power to do it."

"Well, when I'm gone you'll think about me sometimes, won't you, Jack? and for my sake try and give up swearing and taking God's name in vain, as you did only just now when you were talking to Mr. Blake?"

"That's no easy matter, Charley," replied Jack. "I've got into the habit of it, and can't help it when I'm put out."

"Well, do try, Jack, and remember, too, that you can't be too great a sinner for Jesus Christ to pardon. Only read the Testament, and you can take mine when I'm gone — it's in my pocket — and you'll find what I say is true. Pray our Father in heaven to forgive you all your sins for His dear Son's sake, and He'll not refuse you, dear Jack. Give up your sins and turn to Him."

The tears ran down Jack's weather-beaten cheeks and fell on the pale face of the dying boy. After a pause to take breath he continued, —

"If you ever see our good captain again — Jack, and I've prayed every day to God to preserve him and spare his life, — tell him how I thought of him in my last hours, and thank him for all his kindness to me. He taught me to know and love my Saviour, and to do my duty, however hard, and not to mind the sneers and mockery of those who scoffed at us because we weren't afraid to confess Him. If I don't fear to die now, it's because the skipper taught me to trust in God, always to look up to Him as my Father, and feel that He would always be by my side both through life and in death."

"Yes, I'll tell him, my boy, if we ever do meet again, of which there don't seem much chance," said Jack.

"Then there's my poor, dear mother, Jack, — I can

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hardly speak of her, because I know how terribly she'll fret and take on about me. If you get to Plymouth, go and see her; she lives in Exeter street. Tell her not to grieve for me, for I died quite happy, and that we shall meet again in a better home above."

"Yes, Charley, I'll go," said Jack, his voice choking with emotion.

"Don't take on so about me, Jack; if it weren't for my poor, dear mother I'd feel quite glad that I was going to be set free from all the toil and sorrow of this life, to be with my Saviour," he said, in a still fainter voice.

"Oh, Charley," said Jack, "you make me feel as I never did before. What a sinner I've been, — still I'm thinking, after all you've said, that bad as I am perhaps the Lord will have mercy on me. You'll pray for me, won't you, lad? He'll hear you more likely than me."

"I've always prayed for you, Jack, ever since we've been friends, and now I trust my prayers will be answered, but don't say He's more likely to hear me than you. God never turns away His ear from any sinner that repenteth and calls to Him in his trouble."

There was silence now for some minutes Charley seemed quite exhausted. His eyes were closed; he breathed heavily as he lay in Jack's arms.

"It'll soon be over, Jack," whispered Blake, who, with anxious, careworn face, sat beside him.

Jack was silent. The boy again opened his eyes.

"Jack," he said, "will you say 'Our Father' with me? and then we shall have prayed to God together for once — for the first time and last time. It's the prayer Jesus himself taught His disciples to pray."

"Yes, Charley. I used to say it at home with my poor old mother."

Very slowly and in whispered accents the boy repeated the blessed prayer, Jack, in hoarse tones, through his tears following him word by word. It seemed to be a great

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effort for Charley to get through; and when, in a scarcely audible voice, he had said "Amen," which Jack repeated, and which was taken up by all the men who were sitting by, and who were deeply solemnized by the approach of the angel of death in their midst, his head sank back on Jack's shoulder, and he became quite unconscious.

His friend thought that he was gone, but he opened his eyes once more and gazed affectionately in Jack's face. He bent his ear to his lips and just caught the words—

"Thank you, Jack. God — bless — you," and, after a deep sigh, the spirit of the faithful lad passed away from this troublesome world to the haven of everlasting rest. He had through life laid his hand trustingly in that of his Saviour, Who now led him down through the dark way, which He alone knows, into the Father's light.

"He's gone, poor boy," said Blake, as he looked on the poor lad's ashy face.

"Yes, he's the first to be taken, and so we shall all drop off one by one, the weakest first," observed one of the men.

No one spoke. Jack laid the body reverently down in the bottom of the boat and spread a tarpaulin over it, making a strong effort to suppress his tears. Hearts beat in the roughest bosoms, and the men, with whom the gentle, good-natured boy had ever been a favorite, were all more or less affected by his death. They pulled harder than ever at their oars, and said nothing.

The wind was still high, and the boat was tossed like a plaything on the big rolling waves. The poor fellows were utterly despondent, their sick mate's piteous groans, which alone broke the silence, adding to their sad and gloomy feelings.

In the afternoon, when the wind had moderated somewhat, they were able to hoist their sail and take a little rest. As Blake served out the rations he could not help remarking how short they were running. It was the twelfth

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day since they had been in the boat. They seemed as far off from hope of deliverance as ever.

"There'll be fewer mouths to feed every day," said one of the men, "so we'll save food in that way."

"Come, come, take heart, mates!" said the boatswain; "it might have been worse. The weather ain't been so bad. We might have had a regular hurricane which our boat couldn't have lived through. We've weathered the bit of the gale we've had, and now it looks finer again."

"It don't matter much what the weather's like so long as we go on day after day, and never see a sail," remarked a man.

"So long as there's life there's hope," replied Blake; "and there'd have been an end of us, sure enough, if we'd met one of them hurricanes common enough in these parts."

"Tom's much worse," whispered Jack to Blake. "It won't be long before he follows Charley."

"Yes, he do look bad," replied Blake, as he bent over the man who lay in the bottom of the boat, and to whose care Jack had devoted himself since Charley's death, when he was not engaged in rowing.

The poor fellow was unconscious now; if he spoke at all it was in a wild, incoherent way, his thoughts wandering to his wife and child at home in Plymouth.

His mates could do nothing for him; they felt how hard it was not to be able to ease his suffering, or say a word of comfort to him.

Before sunset he breathed his last. The hearts of the unhappy sailors were heavier than ever now. Two deaths in one day among eight men was enough to depress the most sanguine among them — even the boatswain could not say a word of encouragement.

"We must commit their bodies to the deep, mates," said Blake, sadly.

"Yes, that's all we can do for them now," replied the boatswain.

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"Let's bury them like Christians," said Jack, "as our skipper would have done. I've got poor Charley's Prayer-book here, which I took out of his pocket; and you, Mr. Blake, can read some of them funeral prayers like what the captain said over Dan M'Carthy."

"Yes, you're right, Jack," said the boatswain. "You'll read the service, won't you, Mr. Blake?"

"Well, I never did nothing of the kind before," replied Blake, hesitatingly; "but I'm quite of your mind, boatswain, that we should bury them like Christians, as we'd wish others to do by us. I'll do my best, though I'm not much of a scholar."

Jack found the place in Charley's well-worn little Prayer-book, which he handed to the chief officer.

Blake, in a husky voice, and every now and then having to stop in order to master his feelings, read some of the prayers from the office of the burial of the dead at sea, and when he came to the words, "We therefore commit their bodies to the deep," the men reverently dropped the remains of Charley and Tom over the boat's side. Some of them hid their faces in their hands to conceal the emotion which shook their strong frames. Whose turn would come next? was the question they asked themselves.

Jack's mind was filled with poor Charley's last moments. Could he meet death as bravely and calmly as that boy had done? There must be truth in a religion which could give such courage and confidence to a lad like that, in presence of the King of Terrors, at whose approach even the boldest tremble. He looked into his own heart, he acknowledged what a sinner he was. He remembered how often the Lord had sought him, how his heart had now and then been touched by His love and mercy, and he had resolved to lead a better life, but his own passions and bad companions had always led him astray, and he had wandered again and again from the blessed Saviour Who was so willing to forgive and receive him. How little, too, had

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he heeded Martin's kind warnings, or endeavored to follow his good example. Now, cast adrift with his few companions on the wide ocean, with the hope of deliverance growing fainter and fainter, while death seemed to be drawing nearer, he turned more earnestly and sincerely than he had yet done to the Lord Whom he had so often denied and rejected; he prayed to the Father in heaven, to Whom Charley had so confidently yielded up his young life; he humbly craved for the pardon of his past transgressions, and implored the help of the Blessed Spirit that he might have strength to lead a better life, to give up swearing and bad words, as the good lad had entreated him, and not to be ashamed to confess that Divine Master, Who, notwithstanding all his sin and rebellion against Him, had hitherto spared his life, and now gave him another opportunity to repent and turn to Him.

It was under the influence of such thoughts that Jack toiled silently on at his oar. Very few words were said by any of the crew, for the hearts of all were heavier that evening than they had been at all as yet. Night closed around them dark and cheerless. They felt that surely the morrow would be as to-day and the preceding days, and that the sun would rise on the vast gray, cheerless, unpeopled waste of ocean, unrelieved by the glistening white of the long hoped-for sail.

And so it was; but the sky looked stormier, the waves were higher, and the men's hearts sank within them. Blake and the boatswain did their best to encourage them; but the former was obliged to confess that provisions were running very short, and that the rations must be again reduced. Another man was sick, attacked by the fatal scurvy. He gave way to utter despondency, and the hearts of his mates were too sad and depressed to give him any comfort.

The sea was too heavy to-day for the crew to make use of their sail, neither was much progress made in rowing. The oars were handled in a lifeless, mechanical way, — what

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did it matter whether they rowed or not? they must perish either by starvation or from the foundering of their frail boat amid the fury of the waves when the next gale came on.

Eyes were still strained for any vestige of a sail, but strained in vain; rough, thoughtless fellows, who had hardly uttered a prayer since they were children, now called on their God to deliver them, — a God whom they had ignored or forgotten all their lives. Jack now and then took Charley's Testament, Prayer and hymn-book from his pocket, and read a few verses, often strangely suitable to his case. Once the book opened at the 107th Psalm, which, from the worn look of the page, Charley had been fond of reading; the words, "They were carried up to the heaven and down again to the deep; their soul melted away because of the trouble," were an exact description of their present state. Would the succeeding verse, "So when they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, He delivereth them out of their distress," come true, too, if they earnestly, with their whole hearts, besought Him to save them? But they were all such a bad lot, Jack thought. Blake and the boatswain indeed were steady, respectable men, and the other sailors bore good characters as seamen go, but none of them were by any means religious, — they were not like the skipper or poor Charley; few of them ever went to church when ashore, though they'd go to the captain's service when he held one on Sundays aboard ship. But hadn't he often heard that it was sinners Jesus Christ had come to save? — he remembered the words, "The Son of Man is come to seek and to save that which was lost."

With these thoughts in his mind, he made his way to the poor fellow who was lying in the stern-sheets at the bottom of the boat, for Jack's kind heart always prompted him to do what he could to help or comfort a shipmate in distress.

"How do you feel now, Bob?" he inquired.

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"Very bad, Jack. What wouldn't I give for a drink of water? My throat's so dry I can hardly speak."

"There ain't much of that to spare, Bob; it's served out now in driblets. I haven't drank my share yet; I put it in a bottle in my pocket, and you're welcome to it."

Jack's own lips were terribly parched, and he knew he would suffer from losing the few precious drops; but he saw how much more the poor fellow wanted it than he did, so he put the bottle to his lips. He drank it eagerly, and turned a look of deep gratitude on his generous shipmate.

"Thank you, Jack," he said, in a faint voice.

"You're welcome, Bob," he said. "I wish I could do more to help you."

"It's all over with me, Jack. I felt sure when poor Tom died my turn'd come next, for I had hardly strength to lift my oar. It don't matter much, for sooner or later it'll come to us all."

"Yes, Bob, but they do say — leastways, those who are religious like Captain Archer — that God'll hear all who call on Him in trouble, and that when they die He will take them to be with Him in a better world."

"Oh, yes, Jack, I've often heard that; and now I wish I'd listened to the warnings I've had, and led a better life when I had the chance. It's too late now. It's only good people like the skipper and the boy Charley who go to heaven."

"No, Bob," said Jack, earnestly. "I've been thinking it over these last few days, and calling to mind what I've heard the captain say, as well as a-reading in these books of poor Charley, and I'm convinced that it's never too late to repent, and turn to the Lord. The Bible says it ain't, and what it says must be true."

"But I've been such an awful bad sinner, Jack."

"You can't have been half so bad as me. You little know the wild life I've led, especially out in them Austra-

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lian diggings. You've been a quiet chap enough, Bob, compared with me, but I trust through the Lord's mercy I shall be forgiven, wretch that I've been."

Blake, who was sitting close by, overheard Jack's last words. He was the last man in the boat whom he could have imagined would thus speak. Serious thoughts had latterly occupied his own mind, and he added, —

"It's true enough, Bob, what Jack's been a-telling you, though we find it hard to believe, as the boatswain and I have just been saying to each other."

"May the Lord have mercy on me then, sinner as I am," sighed the dying man. "But how can He forgive such a one as me?"

"He died for you, Bob, on the cross, as He did for me and all great sinners. Don't you love Him, then, for such goodness?"

"Yes, that I do," said Bob.

"Well, then, if you love Him, and are really sorry for having offended Him all your life, He will indeed forgive you, so the Bible says," replied Jack.

Poor Bob seemed much easier in his mind now, but his throat had become so parched again that it was scarcely possible for him to speak. Jack bent over him and said the "Our Father," the only prayer which the poor fellow knew by heart, and Bob in a faint whisper repeated it after him, Jack all the while holding his hand. Then he closed his eyes, his head sunk back; Jack felt how his fingers loosened their grasp of his hand. Another soul had passed into eternity. There were now but five men in the boat. They gazed into each other's pale, haggard, anxious faces as if trying to read there who would be taken next.

Another body was committed to the deep that night. Blake read the service in a solemn voice, now and then interrupted by the sobs and groans of the men.

"Mates," he said afterwards, "the Lord alone can deliver us; we are in His hands; let us pray Him to save us by

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sending us a ship to pick us up. But if that isn't His will, we must ask Him to prepare us to meet death bravely and like Christians. We haven't lived Christian lives, any of us, I'm sure we all feel, but it's never too late to repent and turn to the Lord. We're none of us scholars, and I fear most of us have forgotten our prayers, but let's all say this confession I find in Charley's Prayer-book, to be used at sea in times of danger; it meets our case, I think; don't you, Jack?"

"Yes, that it do," he replied.

Blake then read the confession in the forms of prayer to be used at sea, and the Lord's Prayer, in which all the men devoutly joined. The solemn words, the deep acknowledgment of guilt and sorrow for sin, with the trust in the mercy and pardon of the Almighty, seemed to restore a measure of calm and peace to the men's minds. Blake then looked at their diminishing store of provisions. It was now the fourteenth day in the boat. They had been content with shorter rations every day, but now it was a painful fact that in three or four days the stock of provisions would be exhausted, even if they stinted themselves to the utmost.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

ACCUSED.

"Now God be praised that to believing souls
Gives light in darkness, comfort in despair."
— SHAKESPEARE: HENRY V.

"Though it be honest, it is never good
To bring bad news."
— OTHELLO.

KATE had been passing a very anxious time during Martin's long absence. Before he sailed from Melbourne he had written her a letter telling her the many t.ials by which he was beset, and the gloomy apprehensions with which he looked forward to the homeward voyage with an incapable and, perhaps, mutinous crew. He had said nothing about Dan, as the letter had been despatched before his presenting himself at the office at Melbourne; and the only cheering incident alluded to was Jack's unexpected appearance.

Not only was the "Queen of the West" long overdue, but neither letters nor telegrams announcing her arrival at intermediate ports had been received by her owners. Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, notwithstanding their implicit confidence in Captain Archer, knew well enough the difficulties with which he had to contend, and were beginning to feel somewhat apprehensive as to the safety of the ship, it being always the custom of their agents at the ports where their ships touched immediately to telegraph their arrival. They blamed themselves for urging the captain to sail with what was in all probability an incompetent crew. To the inquiries of Kate and other anxious relatives they replied that

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probably the ship was delayed by contrary winds as well as by having an insufficiency of hands on board.

Meanwhile Kate was fully occupied with her aunt, whose rheumatism had been worse latterly, and made her more irritable than usual. From her the poor girl got no comfort. The vicar, however, who fully shared her anxiety about Martin, and was well acquainted with his circumstances, as he had written to him from Melbourne, did his best to cheer her. He told her how he remembered the young captain in his prayers, especially at the Holy Communion, as among those who "in this transitory life are in trouble, sorrow, need, sickness, or any other adversity." To the watchful care of his Father in heaven he daily committed his young friend Martin; and he felt assured, knowing how deeply he loved and how devoted he was to his Blessed Master's service, as well as to his duty, that all would be well in the end, even though it might not seem so to human eyes.

These were dreary days of waiting and suspense. Kate's pale face might be seen at every service at St. Michael's Church which she was able to attend. It was there alone that she found any consolation in her trouble.

One afternoon, just as she had returned home from Evensong, a friend, a young clerk in Willis & Dobbs' office, called in to tell her that the "Queen of the West" had at last anchored in the Sound. Here was good news indeed; still, many anxious questions and doubts arose in her mind. Was Martin on board? was he well? Her joy was not altogether unmixed, though she hoped for the best. The clerk told her he would let her know all particulars about the captain and the voyage as soon as they obtained information from the ship, to which a boat had already been despatched.

The arrival of the "Queen of the West," now so long overdue, caused no little excitement in Plymouth, but especially in the office of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs. Every one was anxious to know the cause of the delay. So soon, therefore, as she was sighted, Mr. Willis and some of his

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clerks started off in a boat to meet and board her, before she reached her moorings. The ship, formerly so trim, looked untidy, as if ill-manned and badly commanded. The captain, generally on the poop and eagerly on the lookout for the boat from the shore, was nowhere to be seen, but Simpson, the chief officer, stood beside the companion waiting for the approaching boat. A number of rough, unsailor-like looking men, some of them with villanous countenances, were hanging over the bulwarks.

The absence of the captain filled Mr. Willis with alarm. He ran eagerly up the companion; glancing with dismay at the filthy decks and slovenly crew he asked Simpson sharply, "Where is the captain?"

"Captain Archer, sir," said Simpson, touching his cap, "is down below, confined in the hold. He murdered one man in cold blood, and had we not taken measures which were necessary for our own preservation, others would have shared the same fate."

"The captain in confinement — for murdering a man?" exclaimed Mr. Willis, angrily; "I don't believe a word of it. Bring up Captain Archer at once; the truth is, I suppose, that you've mutinied. Yet," he continued with some hesitation, "mutineers don't generally bring a ship back to her owners."

"You will find out, sir," said Simpson, respectfully, "when you have fully investigated the matter, that I could not have acted different than I have done; all the crew will bear witness to the murder committed by the captain."

"Bring him up," said Mr. Willis.

In a few moments Martin appeared, led by Tozer and Andrews, handcuffed and fettered. At first the ship-owner did not recognize him.

"Captain Archer," he exclaimed, "is it you? and what is all this story I hear about a murder that they accuse you of having committed?"

"Yes, it is I, sir," said Martin, calmly; "I don't know

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what crimes they mean to lay to my charge, but of murder I am innocent; that I shot a man in self-defence and to preserve the ship and cargo, I own; but it was done sorely against my will. I am ready to give an account of my conduct since we left Melbourne; my conscience is clear, — I have done my duty to the best of my ability."

"I believe you, Captain Archer," said Mr. Willis, as he grasped his handcuffed hand; "you have never deceived us yet, and we've known you all your life. Take off those fetters and handcuffs," he said authoritatively to the men.

"With all respect to you, sir," said Simpson, "excuse me for saying that Captain Archer is under a charge of murder which I and the rest of the ship's company bring against him. For this we shall at once take out a summons, and until he has appeared before the magistrate to answer the charge he must be confined in the police station."

"We shall give bail for you, of course, Captain Archer," said Mr. Willis, taking no notice of Simpson.

"Don't trouble yourself about me, sir," said Martin, quietly. "I'm quite willing to go to prison till I have had a hearing of the magistrates."

"Not if I can help it," said Mr. Willis. "You shall come on shore with me at once."

At this Simpson remonstrated, asserting that the captain was under a charge of murder, and that his accusers refused to lose sight of him till he was delivered up to the authorities. Martin, wishing to put an end to the dispute, proposed that two of the men should accompany him on shore, and take out the summons. It would save Mr. Willis all further trouble if he consented to go to the police-station till he was brought before the magistrates. To this the ship-owner reluctantly consented, but he insisted on Martin's fetters and handcuffs being removed; then leaving one of his clerks on board, with instructions to keep a sharp lookout, and not allow any of the crew to go on

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shore, he returned to the boat, accompanied by Martin and two of his accusers.

As they rowed to the shore, Martin, who sat beside Mr. Willis in the stern, while his two accusers were in the bows, related to him in a low voice all that had happened during the voyage, — the first two mutinies which he had quelled, the death of M'Carthy, the third mutiny, in which the rebels had triumphed, his own imprisonment, the casting adrift of the seven men who had been faithful to him; how he had been called up during the storm, and afterwards made to work as a common sailor, till on nearing port he had again been put into confinement. Mr. Willis listened to the plain, unvarnished story with horror and indignation; no doubt of its truth entered his mind; he was filled with sympathy and pity for the brave, honest young skipper who had been compelled to struggle against such fearful odds in the exercise of his duty. He esteemed him now more highly than ever.

"We shall not forget your courage, Captain Archer; we owe the preservation of the ship and cargo to you; you have risked your life in our service. This mad, vindictive plot will only recoil on the heads of its dastardly inventors. Your innocence is so clear it cannot fail to be proved."

"It is clear to you, sir, because you know me and believe me," replied Martin, sadly, "but I don't conceal from myself that it will go hardly with me, and that appearances are against me. I have not one witness in my favor. Here are some dozen men who will all swear that I committed a murder and other acts of cruelty; what will my single assertion of innocence be worth against their combined evidence of my guilt?"

Mr. Willis had not looked at the matter in this light; it now appeared to him more serious; he was silent for a few moments, then he remarked,—

"Cheer up, Captain Archer; these conspiracies always fail; the evidence generally breaks down for want of

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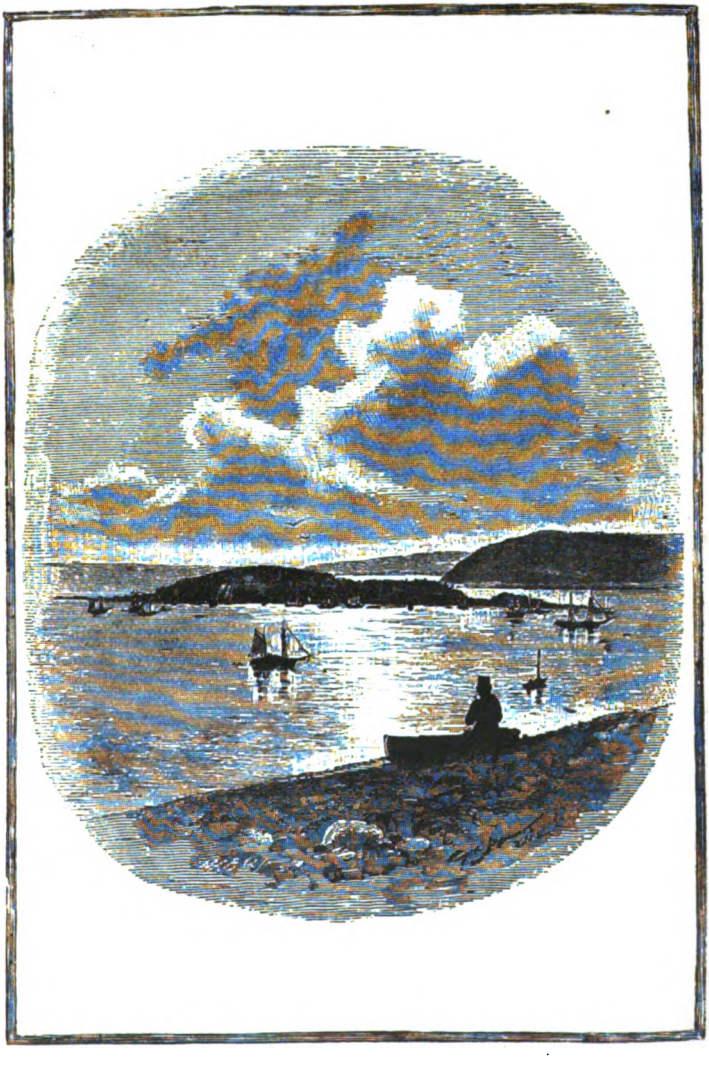

A view from the Hoe. — Page 426.

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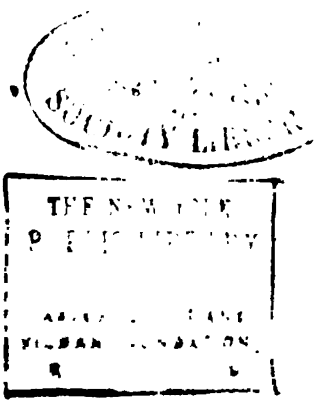

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agreement. Your previous excellent character will tell in your favor."

"We will hope so, sir," said Martin, calmly; "my cause is in God's hand; He alone can bring my innocence to light."

They were now approaching the Barbican landing-place. With what different feelings did Martin gaze on the familiar buildings and scenes than on previous arrivals from his voyages! How eagerly then he hastened on shore; how many friendly hands were stretched out to grasp his; with what joy he thought of his meeting with Kate, who was generally prepared to welcome him by early information of the ship's arrival. But now he was being led on shore as a criminal, accused of murder, and of the murder, too, of his betrothed's brother. That he had slain him he could not deny; would Kate ever forgive this? How, under the most favorable circumstances, could she welcome him as before? She must be informed of the truth; how would she receive the dreadful intelligence? would it not be enough to break her heart? His own, he felt, was well-nigh broken already. There was no more happiness for him in this world. A dark cloud had fallen over his young life; he could discern no light beyond it. Mr. Willis hastily told his partners and friends, who met them on the quay, all that had occurred; they shared his indignation as well as his sympathy for the honest young skipper. All had a kind word to say as they grasped his hand and wished him well out of his trouble. These expressions of sympathy and kindness touched his heart, and brought tears to his eyes.

Among those who were waiting on the Barbican for the captain's arrival was the clerk who had informed Kate that the "Queen of the West" had dropped her anchor in the Sound. He was an old and faithful friend both of Martin and Kate, and a connection of the former. Martin beckoned him to his side, and told him to break the sad news to Kate as gently as he could.

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"Better," he said, "that she should learn the truth from you than hear it first through exaggerated reports, which will reach her soon enough, and probably will appear in to-morrow's newspapers. Tell her she knows me well enough to be certain that I would not tell a lie, and to feel, too, that though Dan was slain by my hand, it was in the stern exercise of my duty to preserve the ship and cargo, and the lives of the crew, too. Ah! gladly indeed would I have fallen in his stead, — God knows it!"

"Yes, Martin, I'll do my best to break it to her; poor girl, how she'll feel it — she's been fretting so about you for weeks. How she brightened up when she heard this afternoon that your ship had been sighted; and she always doted so, too, on her rascally brother; I only wish he'd met with the death he deserved by another hand than yours, Martin."

"It was God's will, Forster," he replied, sadly. "Good-by, — do the best you can for me."

Accompanied by the two men from the ship, as well as by Mr. Willis, Martin was delivered into the hands of the police, and confined in the lock-up for the night, a summons being taken out against him. In the morning he was to be brought before the magistrates.

Kate was sitting by her aunt's bedside when Forster was announced. Since his previous visit she had been in a sad state of anxiety and suspense, but hope prevailed over fear. The God in Whom she and Martin believed and trusted had surely heard her prayers and brought him home in safety.

With a quickly beating heart she hastened down to the room where the clerk was waiting for her. She perceived at once by his countenance that he was the bearer of evil tidings. He said nothing till she asked eagerly —

"The captain, Forster? is he safe? has he landed?"

"Yes, he is safe, and has landed," was the reply.

"But there is something wrong, I see by your manner.

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Why did not Martin come up to see me, as he has always done before?" she said, trembling with agitation; but added in a calm tone, "but you say he is safe; thank God!"

"Some very sad things have happened during this voyage. I grieve to have to tell you. Martin asked me to break the news to you. The crew, as you know, deserted at Melbourne to go to the diggings, and the captain had to put up with any hands he could get to man the ship; they were a bad lot — terrible ruffians, some of them even convicts; among them, I am sorry to say, was your brother Dan"——

"My dear, long-lost brother!" exclaimed Kate, eagerly, "whom I have years since given up as dead."

"Yes, and he proved one of the worst of the crew."

"Alas! then he is no better," Kate again interrupted him.

"They hadn't sailed far when a terrible mutiny broke out on board. At first the captain, by his own resolution and the aid of a few of the old crew who were faithful to him, succeeded in quelling it; but it soon broke out afresh, and in a desperate fight your brother Dan was killed."

"Dan killed!" cried Kate, as she hid her face in her hands. "Alas! alas! just when I hear of him whom I had given up for lost as still living, to learn that he is dead. Oh! my dear, dear brother!"

"And worst of all — but I can hardly tell you more. I have already distressed you so much," said the clerk.

"Go on, Forster — keep back nothing from me; let me know the worst," cried Kate, sorrowfully.

"He was shot by Captain Archer himself in the scuffle. The captain had said he would shoot the first man who resisted his authority. Dan rushed forward and levelled a pistol at Martin's head, both fired, and Dan fell dead on the deck."

Kate sank down in a chair, and covering her face with her hands sobbed as if her heart would break.

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Forster, after allowing her to give vent to her grief for some moments, continued: — "The mutiny was put down for a few days by the captain's energy and decision, but it soon broke out again. This time the villains got the upper hand; there was another fight and some men were killed, but it ended in the captain being overcome and put in irons and kept in confinement during the voyage, while those men who had taken his part were cast adrift in an open boat. And now the rascals have come into Plymouth, and given Captain Archer into the hands of the police under the accusation of murder and cruelty, when he only did his duty, as few men would have had the courage to do, under the circumstances."

"My dear, my only brother killed by Martin's hand. I can't believe it, Forster; why, he saved his life once."

"And so he would again if he'd had the chance, I'm sure, — how could he have acted otherwise?" said Forster.

"Where is Martin now?" she asked, sadly.

"In the lock-up in the police station; to-morrow he is to be brought up before the magistrates" ——

"Accused of murder, — of the murder of my brother! O God! what terrible news, — it is more than I can bear," sobbed Kate.

Perceiving how completely crushed and overwhelmed the poor girl was by the bad news he had brought her the clerk was about to take his leave when she said, eagerly, —

"Shall you see Martin again, Forster?"

"To-morrow morning I'll try to, if you've any message."

"Well, tell him how sorry I am for him in all his trouble, and what deep affliction this news has brought me; and on your way back, Forster, will you be kind enough to call at the rectory and tell all this sad story to Mr. Newberry, — ask him to go and see Martin as soon as he can."

"Yes, willingly. Good-night, Kate. I am sorry to have brought such bad news, with nothing at all cheering to tell you," he said as he left the house.

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Kate was in an agony of grief. She blamed herself now for consenting to this ill-fated voyage, which had brought with it such a terrible complication of horrors and misfortunes. Martin would have refused the command of the ship and remained at home if she had expressed a wish to that effect. But it seemed then that it was his duty to accept the command. He thought so. Mr. Newberry was of that opinion. The ship-owners had urged it. They had prayed for Divine guidance in the matter, and everything seemed to indicate that Martin ought to go. And now what had been the result? A time of terrible hardship and anxiety for Martin, the sudden reappearance of her lost and lamented brother, — from whence she had yet to learn, — only to be slain by the hand of the man whom she had promised to wed, and who had been brought as a captive in irons on board his own ship to his native town to be delivered up a criminal into the hands of the police, accused of the horrible crime of murder — and that of her own brother! These facts were too dreadful for her to realize at once. Every hope she had in this world had vanished in a moment; all her prospects of happiness were scattered to the winds. Despair seemed to have taken possession of her soul. She sent the servant to her aunt to say that she had received bad news, and was unable to see her that night; then she retired to rest, but no sleep visited her weary eyelids.

Martin, to whom the prison cell was luxury in comparison with the wretched dungeon on board ship, and who had already suffered so acutely both in mind and body, had prepared himself to drink the bitter cup to the dregs. He possessed the treasure of a clear and quiet conscience; he had done his duty, so far as he was able, to God and man. He committed his future into the hands of the Almighty, who would, he felt assured, when He saw fit, "make His righteousness as the light, and His judgment as the noonday." He knelt down in the cell and earnestly

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prayed for strength and patience to bear the heavy burden which his Master had seen fit to lay upon him. The one thought which most oppressed him now was of the severe trial which had fallen upon Kate. He knew well her fond love for Dan; the tidings of his death alone would come as a terrible blow to her, but when she learned that her brother had fallen by his hand, that a hard and inexorable fate had forced him to be, as it were, his executioner, how would she bear it? In what light would she look upon his conduct? Could her love for him stand so severe a test?

Wearied and exhausted, he sank to sleep. The sun shining through the narrow window of his cell awoke him in the morning to the full realization of his humiliating position — a prisoner awaiting his trial on a charge of murder.

The newspapers appeared that morning with sensational announcements: "Murder on the High Seas,"—"A Plymouth Captain brought Home in Chains,"—"Horrible Cruelty to a Crew." The news was eagerly devoured by the multitude. When it was discovered that Captain Archer was the culprit great was the astonishment of all who knew him. His friends placed no credence in the report; others expressed opinions that it was a warning against appointing such young men to posts of responsibility, or that people who made such a profession of religion generally turned out to be hypocrites.

Mr. Newberry, who had been informed of the sad story by Forster the previous evening, knew Martin too well to have the least doubt as to his innocence or integrity. He was certain that he was incapable of making a false statement. He perceived at once in what a terrible position of difficulty and responsibility an unfortunate combination of circumstances had placed his unhappy friend. He had no fear that his innocence would not at once be proved, or that the magistrates would not only acquit him without a

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stain upon his character, but with high commendation for his courage and honesty. The fact of his having slain Dan M'Carthy he felt was a most deplorable circumstance, which, he feared, might form an insuperable barrier to his union with Kate. He thought more of that, as an obstacle to his friend's future happiness, than of the seriousness of the criminal charge which was hanging over him.

He sent a message to Kate immediately after hearing the sad news that he would come and see her after visiting Martin; so the first thing in the morning he proceeded to the police station and asked to be admitted to Captain Archer's cell. His request was readily granted. He found Martin quietly sitting reading his Testament, but so greatly was he altered that at first Mr. Newberry scarcely recognized him. He could hardly believe that a man could have been aged so greatly in such a short time, but he did not yet realize the mental strain, the hard work, the confinement, the anguish both of mind and body, which had changed the comely young captain into the worn, haggard, pallid man who grasped his hand with such deep gratitude and affection.

"I need not tell you, Martin," said his pastor, scarcely able to restrain his feelings, "the sympathy I feel for you under this shamefully false accusation, and how deeply I deplore the trying circumstances in which you have been placed, and which have led to this absurd charge. I've come to hear the whole sad story from your own lips, that we may talk it over together, and take the best measures to meet and refute these vile accusations."

"Thank you, sir," said Martin, with tears in his eyes. "I knew you would believe me; and Messrs. Willis & Dobbs have been very kind, too, — they don't doubt my word; but I'll lose no time, and tell you all about it."

Martin related to Mr. Newberry the history of the voyage, from the time when they sailed from Plymouth till their arrival in the Sound on the previous afternoon.

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When he came to the account of the mutiny, and of his having shot Dan M'Carthy, the poor fellow quite broke down. "Ah! sir," he said, "I'd rather have done anything than that — suffered more than I have suffered already, if that were possible. I'd willingly have let him shoot me, if it hadn't been that I was responsible for the ship and cargo, and for the men's lives. Could I have acted otherwise, sir?"

"Certainly not, Martin; you did your duty nobly and bravely; but that it was a terrible duty, especially considering your connection with the man's sister, I cannot deny," said Mr. Newberry.

"Kate never will she cannot, forgive me for it," groaned Martin.

"It will be hard, I grant it," replied the clergyman; "still, I trust she may in time. She cannot fail, when she looks at the matter calmly, to feel that you were not to blame."

"The fact remains, sir, that I took her brother's life."

"You were forced to do it, Martin, — you had no choice; but continue your story."

Martin's recital of the way in which he had been treated by Simpson and the mutineers filled Mr. Newberry with such indignation that the young skipper had some difficulty in convincing him that his case was really a desperate one. He showed him how all the ruffianly crew, Simpson at their head, would combine to witness against him, and that he had not one witness on his side, as all those who took his part and would tell the truth had been cast adrift. Mr. Newberry, who was at first inclined to make light of the charge and to expect the captain's immediate release, was at last really alarmed, but he endeavored to hide his fear from Martin, of whom, after saying many encouraging words, he took a hasty leave, that he might at once consult with Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, and also take the best legal advice on the matter. He found

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that the ship-owners had already arranged for Martin's defence; he was gratified, also, to learn that they implicitly believed in his innocence. He then visited Kate, whom he found plunged in the deepest grief, overwhelmed by the double sorrow which had fallen upon her. His efforts to console her seemed hopeless. He trusted that the gracious Father to Whom he commended her would in His own good time pour the balm of consolation into her wounded spirit.

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CHAPTER XXVIII.

IN PRISON.

"Stone walls do not a prison make,
Nor iron bars a cage;
Minds innocent and quiet take
That for an hermitage.
If I have freedom in my thought,
And in my soul am free,
Angels alone that soar above
Enjoy such liberty."

— R. LOVELACE.

MR. WILLIS had enjoined the clerk whom he had left on board the "Queen of the West" to take possession at once of the ship's papers. He found that the most important were missing. On inquiring of Simpson what had become of these he replied that Captain Archer had probably destroyed them. The log-book, indeed, was there, but the bill of lading and other important documents could not be found. These had been carefully made away with by Simpson for his own purposes. The plot of the mutineers had been carefully and skilfully planned, but their greatest difficulty lay in accounting for the seven men who had been cast adrift. By destroying the list containing the names of the seamen who had joined the ship at Melbourne, and by enjoining the mutineers to swear that these men had never sailed, and that the whole story of their being cast adrift was a fabrication of Martin's, Simpson hoped to overcome this difficulty. If a duplicate list had been sent from Melbourne, or if the ship-owners telegraphed for the names of the men who had signed the articles, the conspirators agreed to swear that the seven men had

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deserted at the last moment. There was a contingency, certainly, and an alarming one, that these men might have been picked up and would appear at an awkward moment for Simpson and his friends; but this seemed to them extremely improbable. As Martin had not a single witness on his side they indulged very sanguine hopes of gaining their cause.

It will be remembered that Jack had left a box with a gold nugget in the captain's cabin on the day when he arrived from the diggings. Simpson, who had always suspected Jack of being fortunate there, but had never succeeded in getting any information from him on the subject, when he came to overhaul the captain's cabin found this box with Jack's name on it. Here was a treasure indeed. He took good care that no one else should hear of his discovery. Well, now he would profit by Jack's luck. He carefully concealed the nugget in his own chest, determining to seize the first opportunity of going to London, and there safely dispose of it. In Plymouth the exhibition of such a nugget would produce excitement, he well knew, and oblige him to answer questions which might be unpleasant. He had already appropriated a sufficient amount of property on board, which did not belong to him, to bribe the men to fidelity to himself, and to swear any number of false oaths as to Martin's conduct.

The news published in the morning's papers of the extraordinary circumstances under which the "Queen of the West" had arrived caused intense excitement in the town, and the police court was therefore crowded long before the magistrates commenced their sitting. Several trivial cases had to be disposed of before Martin was brought up. The young captain was so well known and so universally respected that the sympathy of all right-minded people was in his favor. His worn, haggard, anxious appearance when he took his stand as a prisoner before the magistrates increased the commiseration felt for him; the villanous as-

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pect of his accusers, too, told in his behalf. The magistrates were naturally prepossessed on Martin's side, but they felt that justice must be done. The charge was the most serious that could be laid against a man. Unfortunately the witnesses were very numerous, and, on the whole, their allegations agreed; while the captain had only his own plain assertions to rely upon, in addition to the strong testimonies of good character which his employers, and others to whom he was well known, urged in his behalf. So well had Simpson instructed his men as to the replies they were to give that their evidence did not break down even under the cross-examination of a clever lawyer.

Not only was Martin accused of the murder of Dan M'Carthy in cold blood, but of the grossest acts of cruelty to Tozer, and several other men of the crew. It was asserted that from the time they left Melbourne the captain had threatened M'Carthy that he would be the death of him, and that he should never reach England alive. He had confined Tozer in the black-hole for a week, and had nearly starved him to death. Frequently he had, when he was in fetters and could not defend himself, struck him heavy blows with a marline-spike, leaving him bleeding and stunned. It was impossible for any crew to stand the persistent cruelty of the captain. They were driven to rebellion, but they had been submissive and obedient enough till one morning, when the captain went into the galley and had some angry words with M'Carthy, whom at last he dragged out by the neck and threw down violently on the deck. He then took out a revolver and pointed it at him. M'Carthy on his knees begged him to spare his life. The captain was inexorable, and shot him through the heart, ordering the men to throw his body at once overboard. On their hesitating to do so he pointed his revolver at them in so threatening a manner that they were obliged to obey. However, in self-defence, they concerted together, and took the earliest opportunity of making a combined attack on

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the captain and placing him in confinement, Simpson, the chief officer, taking the command of the ship.

Martin's assertion that seven men and a boy had been cast adrift by the mutineers because they had been faithful to him was met by a flat denial. These men, Simpson and his mates stated, left the ship at the last moment before she sailed from Melbourne. The ship-owners, on the other hand, persisted that they were on the list of seamen who had signed in their Melbourne office, which had been forwarded to them by mail, and that if they had deserted at the last moment their agents would have been aware of the fact, and communicated it to them.

Martin inquired why Sambo, the black cook, was not called as a witness. Simpson, who was less sure of him than any one else, though he had no suspicion how kindly he had behaved to Martin, purposely left him on board, hoping that he would not be summoned as a witness. However, he had taken the precaution to tell him what to say if he was called, adding many threats that if he let out anything which would damage them, or tell in favor of the late captain, he would pay him out for it, and make him repent his treachery.

To the demand that Sambo should be summoned Simpson replied that they had not thought it necessary, as they had witnesses enough to Captain Archer's crimes. But as both Martin and Messrs. Willis & Dobbs persisted, the court adjourned while he was sent for.

On his arrival he was asked to recount the circumstances of M'Carthy's death. He replied that he had not seen it, being down below when it took place, and on coming up saw the body lying on the deck. When cross-questioned on this and other matters he now and then contradicted himself. On being asked if there was a sailor named Jack Adams on board he said there was, but stuttered and hesitated considerably when asked what had become of him, at last stating that he had been killed in the scuffle

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which took place when the captain was seized and imprisoned. The others had made no mention of this, but denied that Jack Adams was on board, asserting that he with the six others had left before sailing from Melbourne. But Sambo, in terror of Simpson, said nothing in Martin's favor, and though his evidence was the weakest point on the side of the mutinous crew, yet it did not tell sufficiently for the skipper to carry much weight.

The magistrates were in no small perplexity. Captain Archer bore such an excellent character; his own statement was so plain and straightforward; there was so much to show that he was the victim of the malice and resentment of the crew, many of whom were known to be villains, that they would gladly have dismissed the case. But, on the other hand, Martin had not a single witness in his favor, while fifteen men, whose evidence agreed in the main, swore that he had murdered a shipmate and treated others with gross cruelty. In the interest of justice, therefore, they felt that they could not do otherwise than reluctantly commit Captain Archer for trial at the next assizes.

Martin, who was prepared for the worst, had expected this; it was the last drop that was wanting to fill up his cup of sorrow. It was a terrible blow both to Mr. Newberry and Messrs. Willis & Dobbs. The latter were full of grief and indignation that a man in whom they had the greatest confidence should be brought into so sad and disgraceful a position owing to his fidelity to their interests and his devotion to his duty. They felt they were to blame themselves; they assumed the full responsibility for Martin's conduct. Of one thing they were sure —that he would be fully vindicated at the trial, for they would spare no pains nor expense to obtain evidence in his favor, and to provide him with the best legal assistance.

The trial would take place at Exeter; till the time

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appointed Martin would be confined in the jail of that city, whither he was to be removed next day.

He was led back to his cell. He sat down, and, burying his face in his hands, tried to realize the sad condition to which he had been brought by the course of events and the successful malice of his enemies. From a position of honor and responsibility which few attained at his age he had fallen to the lowest depths of disgrace and degradation. He had foreseen, indeed, when he sailed from Plymouth on his last voyage, difficulties and dangers ahead, and had shrunk from a post which a sense of duty alone had prompted him to accept; but never had his gloomiest forebodings led him to anticipate the fate which had now befallen him — sitting as a criminal awaiting his trial for murder in the prison cell of his native town.

It was Kate's love and affection which, next to his trust in God, had supported him hitherto in all the trials and dangers to which he had been exposed; but now a terrible barrier seemed to rise between them, for could she ever regard with the same feelings as before the man who had taken her brother's life? Still, overwhelmed as he was with anguish, he was able to maintain a firm confidence in his heavenly Father, who had always been his guide, helper, and protector, and Who, he was sure, would never leave nor forsake him; he had, too, within him —

> "A peace above all earthly dignities —
> A still and quiet conscience."

He took out his Bible and read from the Psalms, in which these words came with strongest comfort to his soul, —

"I have heard the slander of many; fear was on every side; while they took counsel together against me, they devised to take away my life. But I trusted in Thee, O Lord; I said, Thou art my God. My times are in Thy hand: deliver

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me from the hand of mine enemies, and from them that persecute me. Make Thy face to shine upon Thy servant; save me for Thy mercies' sake."

The door of the cell opened and Mr. Newberry came in. He grasped Martin's hand, and then sat down by his side without saying a word.

"I expected this, sir," said the young skipper, after a few moments' silence; "the magistrates could not have acted differently with all those witnesses against me. Simpson has taught them their lessons well," he added with some bitterness, "and they were willing learners."

"I am so assured of your innocence myself, Martin," replied Mr. Newberry, sadly, "that it is hard to understand how any one can hold another opinion. God is indeed bringing you through deep waters, but ere long He will set your feet on the rock and bring your innocence to light. There is no disgrace in being falsely accused, and when it is proved how courageously and uprightly you have acted all along this trial will redound to your honor. You are not the first innocent man, my dear friend, who has suffered shame and imprisonment through the malice of the evil one and his slaves; but you may well say for your comfort and support, 'God is on my side: I will not fear what men can do unto me.'"

"Yes, sir, I know that. He has given me strength hitherto to bear up, and I know He won't forsake me at the very worst," said Martin, calmly; "but tell me, sir, have you seen Kate, and has she sent me any message?"

"Yes, Martin," he replied, "I have just come from visiting her, poor girl. She is heart-broken indeed, as you can well imagine. She loved that brother devotedly; she hoped against hope that she would see him again, — that he would return like the prodigal some day, that his repentance would at last be sincere; and now that hope has gone forever. She feels that he died impenitent, was cut off in the very midst of his iniquity; that he perished by

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your hand too, Martin, makes the cup of her agony to overflow with bitterness. She is convinced that you could not have acted differently, that you bore poor Dan no malice, but on the contrary had always shown him kindness, on one occasion risking your life for his; still the fact remains."

"Yes, sir, I have felt that all along. I fear it will never be the same between us as it was before," said Martin, sadly.

"Time may heal the wound," said Mr. Newberry, "but Kate, broken down and afflicted as she is, asked me to tell you, Martin, that she must see you before you are taken to Exeter, and that she will be here shortly."

"Will she indeed, sir?" said Martin, eagerly. "Dear Kate! I did not expect this, for it will be a terrible shock for her to see me altered, as every one says I am; and in prison and disgrace, too, and on such a charge."

"She loves you still, Martin, through it all. I can perceive that," said his friend, "and that's the reason why she is suffering so acutely. I must leave you now to tell her how glad you will be to see her, and to get permission for her to come. So farewell now, my dear fellow; keep up your courage, trust in God, and all will be well in the end."

"Good-by, sir; thank you," said Martin. "Remember me in your prayers, especially in church."

"That I will, Martin, and always have done," said Mr. Newberry as he left the prison.

He had not been gone long before Kate arrived. The meeting between her and Martin was most affecting. No cloud hitherto had ever interposed between them; both had been looking forward eagerly to the end of this unfortunate voyage as the termination at last of the obstacles which had hitherto prevented their union. Who could ever have imagined that its issues would be so terrible and so fatal to the prospects of both?

For some time neither of them could speak. Kate, who

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was utterly shocked and filled with the deepest pity at Martin's changed appearance, was the first to break the silence, as in broken accents and a voice choked by sobs she endeavored to assure him of her implicit belief in his innocence, and of her heartfelt sympathy in his crushing sorrow — for was it not hers as well? she must share it with him.

"I knew you would believe me, Kate," said Martin, as the tears streamed down his cheeks, "I never doubted that; you have known me too long to think I would willingly act cruelly to any one, much less be guilty of the horrible crime of murder; but can you ever forget, — can I ever forget — that I took your brother's life? — a stern, inexorable fate over which I had no control forcing me to do a deed against which my whole nature revolted."

"Alas! Martin," replied Kate, "that it was so, but God willed it. I know you could not have done otherwise, and that it was your duty to shoot poor Dan. Oh! how I have prayed for my dear brother, that he might turn from his wicked ways before it was too late, and seek the blessed Saviour and find forgiveness. Can such fervent prayers have been wasted? Why has God turned away His face from me and refused to hear me?"

"That is what we can't understand now, dear Kate, but we shall hereafter," said Martin; "we must not lose our confidence in Him because His ways are mysterious and past finding out. We know that His mercy endureth forever, and that His tender mercies are over all His works. Surely no prayers made to Him can be wasted. The souls of all are in His keeping. He will do what seemeth Him best, and though we don't see it now, the time will come when we shall know that all these trials and troubles, this darkness and perplexity, were working together for our good, and for the good, too, of those most dear to us."

"Your faith, Martin, is very strong, that you are able to speak so confidently," said Kate.

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"If I had not had a firm trust and confidence in the Lord," he replied, "I never could have endured what I have gone through during the last few months — I should have given way to utter despair; but in my solitary den on board ship, as well as in this prison, I have found that God has been very near to me. He has indeed brought me very low, in a place of darkness and in the deep, humbling me to the very dust, as I deserved, for my many sins against Him; but He has spoken comfort to my soul, and made me feel indeed that all His paths are mercy and truth."

"Pray for me, dear Martin, that I too may learn to submit to God's will as you do," said Kate through her tears. "These troubles have fallen so suddenly, — so thickly upon me, — I can hardly realize them."

"There may be still harder trials in store for us, Kate; we must be prepared for the worst," he said, sadly.

"What do you mean, Martin?" she asked, eagerly. "What can be worse?"

"It may go against me at the trial, Kate. Remember I have no witness in my favor, and many against me. If these fellows hold together, and give their evidence as they did to-day before the magistrates, I doubt that any jury will acquit me."

"You don't mean to say, Martin, that you will be condemned — condemned to death?" she exclaimed, as she grasped his hand.

"I wish you, dearest Kate, to be prepared for the worst," he said, calmly and affectionately.

She covered her face with her hands and sobbed convulsively.

"O Martin! that can never, never be," she groaned. "A God of justice and mercy could not suffer such a wicked act."

"He is righteous in all His ways, Kate, though they may be unsearchable and past finding out. Let us hope for the

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best while we are prepared for the worst; perhaps those poor fellows who were cast adrift — my good friend Jack among them — may have been picked up, and will come in time to bear witness in my favor."

"God grant it!" said Kate.

A policeman now came in and said that the interview must close, as the van was ready to take the prisoner to the station, to be conveyed by next train to Exeter.

It was a sad, bitter parting.

"Can it ever be between us as it was before, Kate?" inquired Martin, anxiously.

"I love you more than I ever did, and honor you, too, dear Martin," she said, affectionately, as she gazed into his wan, haggard face and weary eyes, "but I feel that I cannot answer your question now; you must give me time, Martin."

"Farewell, Kate; you love me still, you say. Those sweet words will be a comfort to me in my long solitary confinement, for the trial won't be for weeks yet. Farewell, and God bless you!"

Shedding bitter tears she left the prison. Mr. Newberry was waiting outside to accompany her home.

A few minutes after, Martin, in the company of two policemen, was conveyed to the station, and thence by train to Exeter, where he was lodged in the jail.

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CHAPTER XXIX.

SAVED.

"There passed a weary time. Each throat
Was parched, and glazed each eye.
A weary time! a weary time!
How glazed each weary eye.
When, looking westward, I beheld
A something in the sky;
At first it seemed a little speck,
And then it seemed a mist;
It moved and moved, and took at last
A certain shape, I wist."

—COLERIDGE: ANCIENT MARINER.

FOR twenty days now, the five poor fellows cast so cruelly adrift from the "Queen of the West" had been tossing in their frail boat on the desolate wilderness of waters. They had managed to eke out their little store of provisions by decreasing each day their miserable rations, but now it was all gone. Starvation or a watery grave stared them in the face. They were so weak from want of food that they had barely strength to row, and so filled with despondency that they had not even courage to speak. In silence they thought of the loved ones at home whom they would never see again, and of the inevitable fate impending over them. There are few sailors who do not believe in God. Those who go down to the sea in ships and do business in the great waters behold too much of the power and majesty of the Almighty, at Whose word the stormy wind ariseth and lifteth up the waves thereof, to doubt the existence of a Supreme Being. But when seas are calm and skies are

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bright they forget Him; and it is only when real danger stares them in the face, when the winds roar and the waves lift up their giant crests and threaten every moment to engulf their struggling bark, or when exposed, as these poor men were, to the slow death of starvation on the vast, bare, cheerless ocean, that they realize how it is one thing to believe in the existence of a God, and another thing to trust Him.

Jack, deeply impressed by the peaceful, happy death of poor Charley, had been able in those weary hours of sorrow and suffering to review his past life, and see how gracious the Lord had been to him, how many opportunities He had given him of amendment, which he had so often rejected: he turned to Him now in deep penitence with all the ardor of his strong, generous nature, and did his best to cheer his mates and inspire them with that trust in the Almighty which he himself possessed.

On that dreary, sad twentieth evening, as the poor fellows sat almost motionless in the boat, some leaning over the gunwale and contemplating the dark waters so soon to be their graves, others gazing vacantly into space, with that deferred hope for a passing sail which maketh the heart sick, or hanging their heads dejectedly with closed eyes, looking the picture of very despair, Jack alone — feebly indeed — plied the oars. He always said he would do so as long as he had strength to hold them, and that there was nothing which made a man despond so soon as sitting with idle hands doing nothing.

"It'll soon be over now," groaned the carpenter, who was the weakest of the five, and lay exhausted at the bottom of the boat.

"I fear it will, Jim," said the boatswain, sadly. "I've tried to look at the bright side of things all along, you know, but I can't do it no longer."

"They say while there's life there's hope," observed Jack.

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"There ain't much life left in us, nor hope neither," sighed Blake. "Here we've been twenty days tossed about in this 'ere boat with so little food that we are all skeletons, and now that's all gone. I can't see much hope, Jack."

"When things is so bad that they can't be worse they sometimes begin to mend," replied Jack.

"There's no mending for me," said the carpenter. "I'm too weak to last through another day, I know. I've always believed in a God who would save those who call upon Him. I begin to doubt whether there is one now. I'm sure we've all prayed to Him enough."

"You can't say He won't hear us even now, Jim," said Jack.

"It's too late for that, Jack," sighed the poor fellow.

"There's another world, Jim, after this," replied Jack, "where, if you trust in God and pray Him to pardon your sins for Jesus Christ's sake, He'll make amends to you for your sufferings in this world: so I've heard, and so I believe."

"That seems to me the only comfort we've got to look to," said Blake.

"True enough, Mr. Blake," remarked the boatswain. "Them chaps who talk so boldly and say there ain't no God are worse off in such straits than we are — miserable in this life and nothing to look forward to in the next."

"You're right there, boatswain," said Jack, cheerfully. "I've often heard our poor skipper say what a wretched world this would be for many a poor chap if he had not got another and better life to look forward to."

It was a still, sultry night; not a breath of air stirred the ocean, though at the same time there was a heavy swell, the probable precursor of a gale, which caused their boat to roll and pitch violently. The waves did not break, the sea was a mass of undulations; the boat was now carried to the top of a huge mound of dark water, now sunk

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into a valley between, with great hills of swelling ocean on either side. The boatswain sat holding the tiller in the stern-sheets, Jack and Blake feebly plied the oars; the other two men lay sick and exhausted at the bottom of the boat.

It must have been about midnight when, being borne up suddenly to the top of a lofty wave, the boatswain, who still kept up a sharp lookout, exclaimed, excitedly, "Mates, I saw a light there — out yonder!"

But before any of the men could turn their eyes to look in the direction where he pointed the boat was buried between two huge mountains of dark sea, which obscured the view on either side.

"God be praised if it is so!" said Blake, "but don't let us make too sure; we shall feel it all the worse if we're disappointed."

"That we shall," said Jack; "still, leastways we can pray God that it may be a ship's light, and that He will send to save us poor fellows at last."

"Ay, ay, Jack!" said Blake; "that we will."

And a fervent silent prayer for deliverance went up from five poor despondent hearts in the frail boat, tossed on that rugged wilderness of waters, to the merciful Father in heaven, Whose way is in the sea and His path in the great waters, Who turneth not away from the cry of the poor destitute, but heareth the prayer of the storm-tossed mariners in their trouble, and delivereth them out of all their distress.

When, a few moments after, the boat was again borne up to the summit of a large, unbroken wave, all eyes — even those of the poor carpenter, who had raised himself for the purpose, clinging with both hands to the gunwale, — were turned in the direction where the boatswain had seen the light.

He had not been deceived. There was a light, and a bright one, too, plain enough. From the way which it

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moved up and down in the water they knew it belonged to a ship, and it could not be far off. Every heart was filled with joy, hope, and gratitude to God. How they all longed for the daybreak! How their spirits rose and sank as the light appeared and vanished, according to the motion of their boat or the ship which carried it!

"There's no mistaking of it, mates," said Jack, cheerily. "It's a light, and a ship's light, too, thank God; but we mustn't be too certain yet that we shall be saved. If that 'ere light belongs to a steamer, she'll pass us in the dark and not see us. We'll pray then that it may be a sailing ship."

"True, Jack," said Blake; "it's so near that if we can only keep it in sight till daylight we're pretty sure if it's a sailing ship to make 'em see us. There's no wind, they can't be making much way; but with a steamer there'd be little chance. God grant it mayn't be one."

"I don't want to be too confident, mates," said the boatswain, "but I've had plenty of experience on the lookout, — because my sight's said to be so good, — and if that light don't belong to a sailing vessel, I'll never believe my eyes again."

"What makes you so sure, boatswain?" asked the carpenter.

"Why, it keeps too much in the same place to be aboard a steamer; it'd either have got brighter or fainter if it was, according as to whether she were a-coming towards us or going from us," he replied.

"Yes, that stands to common sense," said Blake, cheerily.

They rowed as steadily as their weak arms allowed them in the direction of the light. It seemed as if the day would never dawn; they passed long hours of suspense in which hope prevailed over fear. At last there was a faint gray light in the eastern horizon, but the whole sky had a murky aspect, huge black clouds being piled up to the

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north and west, with every indication of an approaching storm. As the day dawned the light grew fainter, and all eyes were strained to discern the sail of the ship which had shown it.

When at first nothing could be seen, and even the light had vanished, an agony of disappointment fell upon the tortured hearts and weary bodies of those five poor fellows, expressed by sighs and heart-rending groans.

"Don't take on so, mates," cried Jack. "I ain't a-going to believe that the Almighty has deceived us with that 'ere light. Don't give up all hope because you can't see a sail; perhaps the ship hasn't got her sails set."

The next time the boat was borne aloft on the swelling sea the boatswain declared he saw the faint outline of a ship through the thick mist which was coming up in the direction whither their eyes were turned.

"I hope that mist won't hide us from her," he said, anxiously.

There was a little breeze now, so they raised their sail, which had also the effect of making them more conspicuous. As it grew lighter the vessel, in which all their hopes were concentrated, was distinctly seen by them all. It was a merchant ship, a large three-master, bound in the opposite direction to which they were making, — therefore sailing straight down upon them.

It would be impossible to describe or even conceive the transports of joy to which these poor fellows, who had been adrift now for three weeks in an open boat, and were on the very brink of starvation, gave themselves up, when the hopes in which they had scarcely dared to indulge were changed into the full confidence of approaching deliverance. They ate the last miserable ration of food which remained to them, and drank the last drop of water. Even the carpenter, who had a few hours before given up all for lost, feeling that he could not survive another day, had now so greatly revived that he was able to sit up again in the boat, and gaze

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eagerly at the approaching sail. Every heart swelled with gratitude to the merciful Father in heaven Who had heard their cry to Him in their sore distress, and had not allowed them to perish in the wild, desolate waters.

And now there arose a fresh cause for thankfulness and joy. The ship had sighted them — they knew that as well from the signals which she hoisted as from the evident alteration of her course, turning slightly towards the southward to meet them. They seemed to forget their weakness and exhaustion in their happiness and delight. They lowered the sail, which was of little use, and rowed as vigorously towards the ship as their strength allowed. They were very soon alongside. The men on board threw out a rope, and they made their boat fast to the ship. Jack and Blake, clutching hold of the ladder, soon scrambled on board, and the first thing they did was to ask for help to get the other three fellows up who were too weak to climb unassisted. This was effected at last, but with some little difficulty, owing to the heavy swell and the rolling of the vessel.

The ship was an American, bound for San Francisco. The poor fellows were heartily welcomed and kindly treated by the captain and crew, who listened to their sad story with sympathy for them, and indignation against the ruffians who had so cruelly cast them adrift. All rejoiced, however, to think that the object of these wretches had been so far defeated that five of the men whom they had doomed to perish had been rescued, and would sooner or later be able to bear witness against their evil deeds. The carpenter was very ill for several days after being taken on board the "Lincoln." His mates had great fears for his life; but kind treatment, good food, and the hope of seeing old England again combined to restore him, and in ten days' time, though still wan and haggard, he was nearly convalescent.

The "Lincoln" was heavily laden and a slow sailer. The day after the men were taken on board she encountered a heavy gale which must have swamped their boat had they

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then been exposed to its fury. This was followed by contrary winds, so that very little progress was made. It was not till six weeks after Blake and his companions had been picked up that the ship reached San Francisco.

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CHAPTER XXX.

THE TRIAL.

"In law what plea so tainted and corrupt,
But being seasoned with a gracious voice,
Obscures the shew of evil."
— MERCHANT OF VENICE.

"Though thou that art betrayed
Do feel the treason sharply, yet the traitor
Stands in worse case of woe."
— CYMBELINE.

MARTIN, confined in a cell in Exeter gaol, quietly and patiently awaited the day that was to decide his fate. His confidence in God never really failed him, his conscience was clear and calm. It would have been unnatural indeed had he never been assailed by temptations to distrust his Father in heaven, or never been plunged into sad fits of despondency, when he felt as if his God had forsaken him and delivered him up into the hands of his enemies. But "to the upright there ariseth light in darkness," and the clouds of doubt and despondency which oppressed him were speedily dispersed when he turned his whole heart to God in prayer, and drew strength and comfort from the reading of His holy Word. He had, too, a still deeper source of consolation and strength in the devout reception of the Blessed Sacrament, which was administered to him by Mr. Newberry, when he visited him, and by the chaplain of the jail, who was also thoroughly convinced of the skipper's innocence.

Meanwhile, as the time for the assizes approached, strenuous efforts were made by Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, as

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well as by Mr. Newberry, in his defence. They spared neither trouble nor expense, and the cleverest counsel from London was engaged on Martin's side. The weak point, as all acknowledged, was the lack of witnesses; while Simpson and his confederates were able to bring forward a dozen men to swear that the captain had committed a wilful and barbarous murder, he had not one to prove the contrary. He could only fall back on his previous exemplary character, on the improbability of his having committed such a deed, on the untrustworthiness of witnesses nearly all of whom were known to be villains and men of notoriously evil repute.

Mr. Newberry paid repeated visits to Exeter to comfort and advise his unhappy young friend. He always returned with a still deeper conviction of his innocence, and an increased admiration of the steadfastness, calmness, and complete submission to God's will which the skipper manifested.

Meanwhile, Kate suffered the deepest agony of mind. The events of the last few days had effected a complete change in her prospects for life, and blighted all her future happiness. Her heart bled for Martin, to think that one so upright, so innocent, so gentle, should lie under such a terrible accusation, and be the occupant of a prison cell, awaiting a trial the result of which she hardly dared to think of. That he, too, should, by the inevitable force of circumstances, have been obliged to take the life of her only and dearly beloved brother was a fact she could not bear to dwell on. Much as she loved Martin, could she after this ever be his? Could she marry her brother's executioner? Yet he was guiltless, she knew, of Dan's blood — he loathed the deed to which duty had driven him as much as she did. She thought of his worn, haggard looks, his calmness and patience under his sufferings, of all he had endured during those terrible weeks on the voyage, of his faithful life-long love to her, and felt that she

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could hardly refuse him, when he again pressed his suit, if he were set at liberty.

Mr. Newberry did all in his power to cheer and comfort Kate; he perceived how her health was suffering under the mental strain she was called to endure. She passed much of her time in church, attending every service, and praying in the quiet building always open for private worship.

It had been impossible to keep the sad story, of which all Plymouth was talking, a secret from Aunt Sarah, who was, too, a diligent reader of the newspapers. It was a pleasant surprise to Kate that she made no disagreeable remarks about it; indeed, she warmly espoused Martin's cause.

"He never was a favorite of mine, you know, my dear," she said to her niece, "but I don't think him worse than most men, and if you're silly enough to marry at all, I'd just as soon you took him for a husband as any one I know. As to his being guilty of these crimes, it's all a pack of lies, I'm certain. If he shot your good-for-nothing brother, he did so because he couldn't help it, for he was always too good-natured to him; and if he hadn't shot Dan, it's clear enough Dan would have shot him, and a pretty business that would have been. There's no use your taking on so about it, Kate; you won't find twelve honest Englishmen who'll say Martin Archer's guilty, I warrant."

The day appointed for the assizes had come. The judge had arrived. There was great excitement in Exeter. The Castle yard was filled with an eager throng of people discussing the several cases which were to come on for trial, watching the coming and going of the various officials, counsel, witnesses, etc. Police were hurrying hither and thither, and making a way through the crowd for jurymen and witnesses summoned to the court. The case which excited by far the greatest interest was that of the captain of the "Queen of the West," charged with the wilful murder of one of his crew, and with barbarity and cruelty to

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others. Much difference of opinion was expressed by the mob on the question, but the majority sympathized with the skipper. He was a Devonshire man, he bore an irreproachable character, he had stood alone against a mutinous crew, he had no witnesses on his side, while his accusers were evidently a set of villains who had conspired against him. Those who took the opposite side talked about the iniquity of placing so much power in the hands of a ship's captain, especially of so young a man, which gave him the opportunity of gratifying any private revenge he might have against a shipmate; and expressed a hope that this violent and unscrupulous skipper might be made an example of, to put an end to such scandals in the future.

Several other cases had to be disposed of first, and it was not until the afternoon of the second day that the witnesses in Captain Archer's indictment were summoned before the grand jury.

The two chief members of the firm of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs were present at the trial, and Mr. Newberry had arranged to be at Exeter during the week. He was Martin's oldest and most intimate friend — he regarded him almost as a son. He was determined to be with him as much as circumstances would allow, and to do his best to cheer and comfort him, — moreover, he had been subpœnaed as one of the witnesses for the defence, to bear his testimony to the prisoner's excellent character.

The grand jury, after a long and careful examination of the witnesses, found a true bill against Captain Archer, indicted for the murder of Daniel M'Carthy.

This had been expected by every one interested in the case. The trial would now commence next morning.

The court, which is by no means a large one, was crowded to overflowing. All eyes were turned towards the prisoner in the dock — a tall, muscular man, with light hair and beard, deep lines of care and anxiety graven in his careworn countenance, giving him the appearance of being ten

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or fifteen years older than he really was. The thorough honesty imprinted on his features, the unflinching glance of his clear, bright eye, the calm steadfastness and intrepidity of his manner, could not fail to make a favorable impression on the assembly. All felt that this was not the man likely to be guilty of the foul crime laid to his charge.

Simpson was the first witness called. He had made the best use of the time intervening between the prisoner's committal by the magistrates and the trial in getting up his charge completely and circumstantially.

When, after uttering the grossest falsehoods and misstatements, he saw Martin's eyes, in which pity was mingled with scorn, turned full upon him, he now and then quailed and stumbled in his evidence, but he quickly recovered himself.

Strictly cross-examined by Martin's counsel, he once or twice contradicted himself. The disappearance of the seven men, who Simpson and his allies declared had never left Melbourne, was a point on which he was hardly pressed, as well as to what had become of the ship's papers. Questioned concerning a gold nugget enclosed in a box in the captain's cabin, he winced, as the question was quite unexpected, but quickly recovering his presence of mind, denied any knowledge of it.

The other men followed. Tozer described the cruelties inflicted on him by Martin, stating that he had repeatedly struck him with a marline-spike on the head when he was heavily fettered and unable to defend himself, exhibiting scars as proof of the truth of his statements. Andrews confirmed in every particular Simpson's story of the murder of Dan M'Carthy, against whom the captain had an inveterate grudge, having treated him with every indignity and refinement of cruelty from the moment he came on board, and had shot him down in cold blood without any provocation. The other men followed in succession, and though

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in cross-examination they occasionally slightly contradicted themselves or each other, yet on the whole their evidence was consistent and hung together. The last witness called was Sambo, the black cook. A few days before he had been threatened by Simpson and Tozer that if in his evidence he disclosed anything to their disadvantage they would take deadly vengeance upon him, so that the poor fellow was thoroughly cowed and terrified. Though he had been well schooled as to what he was to say, he broke down when he saw Martin's reproachful gaze turned upon him, and in the cross-examination completely contradicted himself. When asked suddenly the quite unexpected question what had become of the boy Charley Barry, he replied at first that he had been put into the boat with the rest, but, perceiving at once the mistake he had made, contradicted himself, and said that he had been killed by the captain in a fit of rage.

Martin's counsel discovering here a very important flaw in the evidence pressed Sambo very hard, and made him contradict himself repeatedly. The other witnesses were called again; they swore that Sambo was weak in the head, and that no reliance could be placed on his statements, and still held firmly to their original story.

The case for the Crown did not terminate till the afternoon of the second day. On the morning of the third, Captain Archer's counsel made a telling and eloquent speech in his defence; he spoke in feeling terms of the high character of the accused, of his steadfast devotion to duty, of his courage, intrepidity, and generosity. He endeavored to prove that it was impossible he could have borne any animosity to Daniel M'Carthy. He instanced the fact, that once, at the peril of his own, he had saved Dan's life when almost in the jaws of a shark, a feat of heroism which had been publicly acknowledged in his native town, where a Humane Society medal had been presented to him. Was it likely, too, that he would murder the brother

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of the girl to whom he was engaged, and whom he hoped to marry immediately on his arrival at Plymouth? That he had slain M'Carthy he admitted, but stern necessity in the exercise of his duty had forced him to the deed. The man was the leader of a mutiny which, if the ship and cargo were to be saved, must be put down at any cost. He showed what a set of villains the crew were; how, owing to the scarceness of hands at Melbourne, the captain had been obliged to put up with them. That other and steadier men had sailed from the port and had taken the captain's side, but, overcome by numbers, had been cast adrift in a boat, he endeavored skilfully to prove, stating that Sambo had admitted the fact. In an eloquent peroration he appealed to the jury not to sacrifice the life of an innocent man to the miserable revenge of a set of scoundrels, not one of whom, with the exception of Simpson, could bring forward a single testimonial of good character, but to take into consideration the whole course of Captain Archer's life, — honest, straightforward, courageous, inspired by a stern sense of duty, — and to weigh well the evidence of his employers and others who had known him all his life, who had not the shadow of a doubt as to his innocence, which their testimony would prove.

A thrill of sympathy seemed to pass through the court when the eloquent advocate sat down, and eyes of compassionate interest were turned on the prisoner, who still maintained his calm and unmoved attitude.

Then followed the evidence of the witnesses for the defence. Captains whom he had sailed under, shipmates who had served with him, all bore willing testimony to his thorough honesty, uprightness, devotion to duty, as well as to his kind-heartedness and humanity. The clergyman, who had known him from a child, and who had with deep and loving interest watched his commendable career, in feeling words, broken by emotion, expressed his firm and inflexible conviction of the young skipper's innocence. In

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no less decided words, and with all the force and energy which came from the knowledge that they were in a measure respo..sible for their captain's action, because they had urged him to leave Melbourne with so motley and undisciplined a crew, did all the members of the firm of Willis & Dobbs bear witness to their implicit confidence in Captain Archer, and their utter and entire disbelief of the truth of the charge brought against him. Cross-examined by the counsel for the prosecution, not a word could be extorted from any of these witnesses against the character of the accused.

On the fourth morning of the trial the judge commenced his summing up. It is the first duty of a judge to be impartial, and to conceal his private sympathies and prepossessions. In this case his feelings were strongly on the side of the prisoner; on the other hand, he felt he would fail in his duty if he did not plainly put before the jury in his summing up the preponderating and overwhelming evidence there was against him, so far as the number of the witnesses was concerned; but, at the same time, he reminded them that they must take into consideration the previous character of these witnesses, as well as the motives which might influence them. Whether the hesitating and contradictory evidence of Sambo told in favor of the accused was a point to which they must seriously turn their attention. That out of all the men on board not one had a word to say in his favor told strongly against the skipper; he could not produce one witness on his side, except those who came forward to testify to his previous character, which, there could be no doubt to any of their minds, had been unexceptionable. But whether the excellence of his antecedents was sufficient cause to acquit the prisoner of the recent crime so circumstantially and by so many witnesses laid to his charge was a question they must weigh well and impartially. Let them come to no hasty decision, but remember that the life of a fellow-man was at stake;

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what weightier issue could hang on their deliberation than the fate of one so young in years, and hitherto of so blameless a character?

The jury now retired to consider their verdict. For two hours they were absent from the court, during which period the excitement of all present grew more and more intense. When at last the door opened, and the jurymen one by one resumed their places, so deep was the silence which immediately reigned through the court-house that one might have heard a pin drop.

There was a look of great anxiety on the judge's countenance, as in a slow and solemn voice he asked: —

"Gentlemen of the jury, are you agreed on your verdict?"

"We are, my lord," replied the foreman.

"What is your verdict?"

"Guilty, my lord; but we strongly recommend the prisoner to mercy."

A thrill of horror passed through the assembly, and some exclamations of strong disapprobation were raised, which were immediately suppressed by the judge. The prisoner for a moment was unmanned; he hid his face in his hands. We often steel our minds to expect the worst; but when it really comes, — prepared as we thought we were, — break down at the shock. But Martin almost immediately recovered his composure. Mr. Newberry was completely overcome. He had never anticipated this. Horror and indignation were expressed in the pale and careworn features of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs.

The judge, a stern and impartial man, had himself hardly expected the verdict. A shade of disappointment passed over his rugged face. He asked the prisoner if he wished to make any remarks before sentence was pronounced upon him. Martin replied in a firm, clear voice: —

"I have only to repeat, my lord, that before God, and in the presence of all those here assembled, I am innocent of

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the terrible crime with which I am accused. May the Lord have mercy on my accusers, and turn their hearts."

Women sobbed aloud, and strong men, his shipmates and life-long friends, who had come from Plymouth to attend the trial, could scarcely suppress their emotion as they listened to these honest, simple words.

Nothing now remained for the judge but to perform the terrible and to him repugnant duty of passing sentence on the prisoner. While he recognized the difficulty the jury must have had in deciding on their verdict, and gave them all credit for honesty, his own sympathies were on the side of the unfortunate skipper, who, he could not help believing, was really innocent. In the fewest words possible, and without dwelling at all on the enormity of the crime, he assumed the black cap and passed sentence of death, adding that the recommendation to mercy which the jury had appended to their verdict should be transmitted to the proper authorities, by whom it would receive due consideration.

Mr. Newberry, terribly agitated, grasped the prisoner's hand as he was being led from the dock.

"Cheer up, Martin, dear friend," he said, in broken accents; "it is not too late. If there is a God in heaven He will interpose and prove your innocence at last. Trust in Him as you have ever done, and He will never fail you."

"Thank you, sir," said Martin, quietly, "for all your kind interest and trouble. Don't take on so about me. I know my innocence 'll be proved plain enough some day, though it may come too late to save my life. If I have to die, it's better, sir, to die innocent than guilty of the crime of which I am accused."

"We'll save your life, Captain Archer, be sure of that," said Mr. Willis, making his way up to the prisoner.

"I shall never forget your kindness, sir, and all the pains you have taken in my behalf," said Martin, sadly, as he was led away by the warders to his cell.

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Once alone, the calmness and courage with which he had borne the terrible trials of the day gave way. He fell on his knees, and with his head resting against the cold bare walls of his cell he wept like a child, while convulsive sobs shook his strong frame. It was a relief to him, after the strain which he had put upon his feelings, thus freely to give way to the pent-up emotion in his breast. He could hardly realize the stern, dreadful fact that he, Martin Archer, the steady, honest, well-meaning skipper, was now a condemned criminal, awaiting, in a felon's cell, his summons to the gallows. What a disgrace to his name, — to his family! What a strange termination to a life which he could conscientiously say had, as far as it was in his power, been animated throughout by a strong sense of duty! And yet he had tried to serve God, and acknowledge Him in all his ways; he had looked up to Him as to a loving and all-powerful Father, who would guide him to do what was right, protect him in danger, direct his paths, and bring him at last to the haven of eternal rest. But now it seemed really as if his God had forsaken him — as if He had said to his enemies, "Persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him." Still, though he seemed to be walking in darkness and had no light, he would "trust in the name of the Lord and stay upon his God." At that terrible hour his faith failed not utterly, and after strengthening himself by prayer and the reading of God's Word, he was able to say with Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

The thought which most oppressed him, causing him far more anxiety than his own impending fate, was the effect which this, to her most unexpected, verdict would have on Kate. How would she bear such horrible tidings? They could not be concealed from her, and he knew how gently Mr. Newberry would break the news; but still, nothing could soften their reality. He, Martin, her lover, had been convicted of the wilful murder of her brother, and sen-

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tenced to be hung. He could only implore the tender, loving Saviour, Who feels all our sorrows and infirmities, to give her strength to endure this bitter trial.

It was with malicious joy that Simpson left the court-house that afternoon. His policy had triumphed; never had a conspiracy been more successful; his men whom he had so carefully instructed had proved apt scholars, and given their evidence with so great unanimity and consistency that the clever cross-examination by the prisoner's counsel had not materially shaken it. His enemy, Martin Archer, was condemned to death, and even if that extreme sentence were commuted, it would be to life-long penal servitude, so that he would give him no further trouble. Notwithstanding all this Simpson did not feel quite comfortable; his conscience was not altogether dead, and pricked him rather sharply now and then. What harm had the skipper ever done to him? If he were brought to the gallows, would he not be his murderer, and for all his life have the blood of an innocent man on his head? To drown such feelings he entered the nearest public-house and drank heavily; here he was joined by some of his shipmates, and the success of their plot was celebrated by a long carouse. Jack's nugget had not yet been disposed of, but now that the trial was over Simpson determined to go as soon as possible to London and convert it into cash. To keep it any longer might be dangerous.

As may well be imagined, poor Kate was completely heart-broken when she was told the news. Though assured by Mr. Newberry that the sentence would never be carried into execution, that the time must come when Martin's innocence would be proved, she felt so keenly the disgrace and degradation which had fallen upon him, she sympathized so deeply with him, unable as she was to share his sorrow, that her agony was well-nigh unendurable. The quiet church was her favorite resort; there alone with God in prayer she found some degree of comfort in her overwhelming grief.

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The most strenuous efforts were now made by Captain Archer's friends to obtain a commutation of the sentence, or at all events a respite. For this purpose Mr. Willis, accompanied by Mr. Newberry, proceeded to London to have an interview with the Home Secretary.

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CHAPTER XXXI.

CROSSING A CONTINENT.

" Above the tumult of the cañon lifted,
The gray hawk breathless hung;
Or on the hill a winged shadow drifted
Where furze and thorn-bush clung;
Or where, half-way, the mountain side was furrowed
With many a seam and scar;
Or some abandoned tunnel dimly burrowed, —
A mole-hill seen so far."

—BRET HARTE.

AFTER a long and tedious voyage the "Lincoln" at last anchored in the port of San Francisco. Blake and his four companions immediately landed, and were lodged at a Sailors' Home in that city until arrangements could be made for sending them across the continent to New York. Messrs. Willis & Dobbs had no agents in San Francisco, but the owners of the "Lincoln," when they heard the sad and exciting story of the five shipwrecked men, offered to advance the money for their journey to New York, to be refunded to them by the agent of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs in that city. With restored health, comfortably clothed, and in good spirits, the five English sailors took their seats in the cars of the great Pacific Railway, and commenced the long journey which was to bring them from the shores of the Pacific to those of the Atlantic Ocean.

"We shall see old England again at last, then," said Jack, as the train proceeded on its way; "our troubles are well-nigh over now, — how I wish we had some news of our ship, and her good skipper!"

"So do I heartily, Jack," said Blake; "I'm always a-

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thinking about him. I fear those brutes have murdered him, and perhaps scuttled the ship."

"It's some comfort to think, though, that there's every chance of our getting to Plymouth now, and telling the true story," remarked the boatswain.

"Yes, indeed," said Jack, "Simpson's up to telling any amount of lies, and he hated our skipper so he'd do anything to be revenged of him."

"I believe you there, Jack," said the carpenter; "I always thought Mr. Simpson was a sneak and a coward."

"He'll be nicely paid out, though, when we get to England, if he's anywhere to be found there," said Blake, with a chuckle.

"Heartily glad shall I be," said Jack, "that Simpson should be punished as he deserves; but the fate of our good skipper, Captain Archer, — that's what troubles me, though I can't think the Lord would suffer such a good, upright man as him to be murdered by those ruffians we left aboard our ship."

"Nor I, neither," said the carpenter. "God knows, too, how we've all prayed that his life should be spared, and sure enough He'll grant our request."

The train rolled on up the steep sides of the Rocky Mountains, and over the flat, boundless prairies, day and night. The five sailors cheered themselves with the thought of home, — to which, far away as it was, every hour was bringing them nearer, — of that dear English home that one time they thought they should never see again, and towards which their hearts yearned with inexpressible longing.

On the fourth day of their journey they reached Omaha, a dreary, unfinished city, built on a sandy plain on the shores of the Missouri, with a large railway depot, the terminus of the Union Pacific Line. Here, after a longer halt than usual, just before the train started, the newsboy came into the carriage with a large bundle of New York

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and Chicago papers, which were eagerly bought by the American passengers.

"Shall we have a paper, Mr. Blake?" said Jack.

"I should like one well enough," he replied, "if they told us anything about the old country; but all of 'em I've ever seen are full of their own politics, big swindles, appalling accidents, and horrible murders."

"True enough," said Jack, "and five cents is precious dear, when one can get a 'Daily Telegraph,' which is twice as big, at home, for a penny; but it's something to read, and it'll help us to pass the time. I say, boy, let's have one of them papers."

"Which will you have?" said the boy; "Chicago Times," "New York Herald," "Omaha News"——

"Give us the 'New York Herald,'" said Jack; "it has more English news, I'm told, than any of the others."

The boy handed Jack the paper in return for his five cents. Jack lighted his pipe, ensconced himself in a corner seat, and as the train rolled over the great Missouri bridge towards Council Bluffs unfolded the paper. His eye soon fell on European news and cablegrams. He had not been occupied with his paper for more than five minutes when the other passengers were startled by a loud exclamation of horror and dismay proceeding from one of the corners of the carriage, as Jack sprang to his feet, threw the paper on the ground, wildly gesticulating and uttering incoherent sounds.

"That 'ere English sailor's gone mad, I guess," said a tall, lean Yankee.

"We're just close on Council Bluffs," said his companion, "where, if he's troublesome, I reckon we can have him fixed in a lunatic asylum."

"What's the matter, Jack?" said Blake, going up to him and seizing him by the arm. "Sit down at once, and be quiet, and don't make a fool of yourself before these 'ere Yankees."

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"The matter! You ask me what's the matter, Blake?" cried Jack. "Why, just read the paper and you'll see our skipper imprisoned, tried, condemned, sentenced to death for wilful murder, — not a witness in his favor, every one against him, — and he'll be hung sure enough, long before we get to England to prove him innocent. It's enough to drive any one mad, Blake, I say."

The other three men crowded round Jack, who became more excited than ever. Blake, turning to their fellow-passengers, said, —

"I hope you'll excuse our mate, sirs. He's just read very bad news in the paper, which has excited him. He'll soon come to, and be quiet again."

"All right," said the tall Yankee. "We're used in these parts to very queer passengers," and he took a fresh bite at his quid of tobacco.

"Now, Jack, let's see what the paper says," said Blake, taking up the "New York Herald," while the other men stood beside him or looked over his shoulder.

In very large-typed, sensational headings, as is the custom with American newspapers, he read, — "Great Britain. Horrible Murder on the High Seas. A Brutal Captain. Gross Cruelty to a Crew. Long and Exciting Trial. Found Guilty. Sentenced to Death." Then followed an exaggerated account of the mutiny on board the "Queen of the West" caused by the brutality of the captain, who was described as a perfect monster, well deserving the sentence passed upon him. It was, however, added that the captain had previously borne a good character, that much sympathy was felt for him in Plymouth, and that had it not been for the overwhelming amount of evidence brought to bear against him, and the absence of a single witness in his favor, he would probably have been acquitted.

Blake and the other three men were almost as excited as Jack had been, when they read this distressing news.

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Very strong and loud were they in their expressions against the villains by whose foul perjury their innocent and beloved skipper had been condemned to a felon's death. Their apathetic fellow-passengers gave little heed to them, as they were not interested in the matter. When they had somewhat got over the first shock, Blake, who was the calmest among them, remarked, — "We must save our skipper, mates."

"It's too late," sighed Jack; "maybe he's been already hung. You forgot this is a New York paper, and the news is stale."

"Yes; but you forget, Jack, it has all been wired from England, — it ain't come by letter. Now, just look here: to-day's the 14th, this newspaper was printed at New York the day before yesterday, the 12th, and this here telegraph from England, which brings us this bad news, is dated the 11th, — that's three days ago only. After a man's sentenced there's always ten days or a fortnight before he's executed, so we've time enough to save him yet."

"Not time to get to Plymouth, Mr. Blake," said the carpenter.

"No, but more than enough to telegraph," said the boatswain.

"Hurrah!" cried Jack, passing from extreme despondency to a transport of joy, "we'll save our captain yet, and have every one of them villains, and Simpson at their head, brought to justice."

"That we will!" cried the other men.

"How shall we set about it, Mr. Blake?" asked the carpenter. "It costs a lot to telegraph to England, and we've no money — half a dollar a word from New York, and more from out here."

"Yes, I've thought of that, but if the worst comes to the worst we shall be at New York in less than three days, and then there'll be plenty of time; but as I don't want to keep our poor skipper in prison with that awful sentence hang-

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ing over him longer than can be helped we must scrape together as much money as we can and telegraph from Chicago to-morrow to Thomson & Gibbs, the agents of Willis & Dobbs at New York, and they'll send the message on to England."

"God be praised for that telegraph!" said Jack; "it'll save Captain Archer's life."

"What a good thing you bought that paper, Jack," said Bill.

"Yes, quite providential," remarked the carpenter.

During the whole day and a great part of the night the men continued to discuss the subject. They wondered what had occurred during the voyage after they had been cast adrift — how Simpson had managed to get the ship to Plymouth with such an incapable and unruly crew. They longed for fuller information than that afforded by the meagre but sensational telegrams of the "New York Herald."

Next morning the train arrived at Chicago, and they had to wait a couple of hours before proceeding to New York. Blake and Jack, leaving their companions at the depot, sought for the nearest telegraph office, and wired to Messrs. Thomson & Gibbs at New York, —

"Wire immediately — 'Willis & Dobbs, Plymouth, — Five survivors "Queen of the West's" crew are coming to England to prove Captain Archer's innocence.'"

This accomplished they felt a weight off their minds. The message which was to save their good skipper's life would soon with lightning speed be flashing across the ocean, carrying joy and peace to the innocent, consternation and dismay to the guilty.

Never since they sailed from Melbourne had the five seamen felt so happy and thankful as when they took their seats that afternoon in the train which was to convey them to New York.

Their hearts swelled with gratitude to their loving

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Father in heaven, Who had heard and so graciously answered their prayers, not only by saving their lives when at the very last extremity, and when they had well-nigh abandoned all hope, but also by the providential interposition through which they had learned of the wicked plot against their captain's life in time to frustrate it, to save him and bring the dastardly conspirators to justice.

"After all His mercies to me," said Jack, "none of which I have deserved, for I have lived a bad life and always forgotten Him when things went well, I'm determined to serve God in future, and with His help to show I'm not ashamed of religion or afraid of being laughed at."

"We'd all of us be an ungrateful lot if we didn't do the same," said the carpenter. "If any of us chaps has more cause to be thankful to the Almighty than the rest it's me, for I'm sure it was all but over with me in that boat, and I couldn't have lasted another hour if we hadn't been picked up."

It was Sunday afternoon when the men reached New York. They proceeded at once to a Sailors' Home to which they had been recommended. The offices of Messrs. Thomson & Gibbs were closed, but they were glad to learn that several steamers were to sail for Liverpool on the following day.

After they had cleaned themselves up the five seamen started off to find a church, for they were all of one mind in their desire to take the first opportunity of thanking God for all His mercies so plainly shown them. They made their way along the crowded streets, and just as they had passed under the bridge of the elevated railway at Houston Street, Jack exclaimed, —

"I say, mates, look at that fiery cross up there — what can that be?"

"It's on the top of a church steeple, sure enough," said Blake.

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"Then let us make for that 'ere church," said the boatswain.

They soon found their way to St. Augustine's Church, close by, the cross of which, illuminated by gas jets on Sundays, is a guiding beacon to church-goers after sunset. Here they met with a warm welcome, free and open seats, and hearty worship, as they were accustomed to at home.

The prayers were almost the same as those which they had been accustomed to hear since their childhood, and to which they had listened the last time read by Captain Archer on board ship. The prayer for persons going to sea, as well as the thanksgiving for a safe return from the same, so generally used in the Episcopal churches at New York, though unfamiliar to English ears, appeared specially suitable to their case. Very earnestly, heartily, and as if they thoroughly realized the truth of each line, did they all join in the concluding hymn, sung to the tune they knew so well. —

> "O God, our help in ages past,
> Our hope in years to come;
> Our shelter from the stormy blast,
> And our eternal home."

Early next morning they proceeded to the office of Messrs. Thomson & Gibbs, where they learned to their great satisfaction that their telegram had been received and duly despatched to England, and that they were to sail that afternoon by a fast steamer for Liverpool.

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CHAPTER XXXII.

THE TELEGRAM.

"Get but the truth once uttered, and 'tis like
A star new born that drops into its place,
And which, once circling in its placid round,
Not all the tumult of the earth can shake."

— LOWELL.

THE day following the conclusion of Captain Archer's trial Simpson disappeared from Plymouth. The counsel for the defence, who were still retained by Messrs. Willis & Dobbs with the hope that some fresh evidence might be found in favor of the captain, and who, convinced throughout of his innocence, were thoroughly on the alert, considered this a suspicious circumstance, and at once employed a detective to discover if possible his whereabouts, and watch his proceedings. The same day Mr. Willis and Mr. Newberry travelled to London, to seek an interview with the Home Secretary.

Simpson's departure had been so sudden and secret that neither Tozer nor Andrews knew anything about it; their curiosity, mingled with a slight feeling of jealousy, was excited when they heard it. Knowing what a consummate liar Simpson was, their suspicions were aroused that he had secretly secured a larger share of the plunder, notwithstanding his assertion that the whole had been equally divided among the crew with no advantage to himself.

They were overheard grumbling and passing some severe remarks on Simpson in a low public-house, and their words

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were noted down by a policeman in plain clothes, who was told off to watch them.

It was discovered, on inquiry, that Simpson had left for London by the first train that morning. He carried with him a small box bound with a strong cord, and which appeared to be heavy. He took care never to lose sight of this, allowed no one to touch it, always carried it himself, and put it under the seat which he occupied in a third-class carriage. As the train by which he travelled was a slow one, his disappearance and the suspicious facts attending it had been remarked in time to telegraph to the London police authorities to watch him on his arrival.

But Simpson was thoroughly on his guard. No sooner did the train stop at Paddington than he jumped into a cab, and told the driver in a loud voice to take him to a certain street in Islington. After he had driven some twenty minutes he informed him that he had changed his mind, and ordered him to drive to a public-house in the Borough. Here he alighted, and carrying his box into the coffee-room sat down to dinner. He had not made up his mind yet whether he should sleep there or not; on reflection he decided to leave after the meal, so he paid his bill, took up his box, and proceeded to the London Bridge Station. Here he took a ticket for New Cross, but got out at Bermondsey, and plunging into a labyrinth of dingy streets, sought a night's lodging in an obscure public-house.

The detective hearing Simpson tell the cabman to drive to Islington, had, as he thought, preceded him there, but when, after waiting a long time in the street he had named, nothing was seen of him, the officer perceived he had been baffled, and purposely put on the wrong scent. He had not given Simpson credit for so much cunning, nor been led to believe that he suspected he was watched. However, having taken the number of the cab, he soon found out from the cabman where he had really alighted. He

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traced him as far as the London Bridge Station, but beyond that he had no clue whatever.

It was after considerable difficulty and no little delay that Mr. Willis and Mr. Newberry obtained at last an interview with the Home Secretary. He told them he had already given the most careful consideration to their written appeal; the case certainly was a peculiar one, particularly owing to the exemplary character previously borne by the condemned man, still they must remember he had had a fair and a long trial, and that the evidence of his guilt was unanimous and overwhelming. He could not, in the face of this, reconcile it with his conscience to grant a reprieve.

Mr. Newberry pleaded hard; he urged in the captain's favor his life-long acquaintance with him, his steady, upright, generous character. He said that he had never a shadow of a doubt as to his innocence. Mr. Willis confirmed every word the clergyman said, and implored the Minister, considering the jury's strong recommendation to mercy, if he could do no more, to grant a fortnight's respite, in case the other men whom the captain stated had been turned adrift — which statement he implicitly believed — should yet make their appearance. To this last and very reasonable request the Home Secretary replied that he would consult with the legal advisers of the Crown on the subject, and forward his decision in a few days. He added that this interview must be a final one, as the great press of official business at present so entirely occupied his time that it would be impossible for him to admit them again.

With very heavy hearts, and with fainter hopes than ever of saving their friend, the two gentlemen returned to Plymouth, where the greatest disappointment was expressed at the ill success of their mission. All the authorities of the town, the Mayor at the head, warmly espoused the cause of Captain Archer, and determined not to relax

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their efforts in his behalf. Petitions to the Queen were drawn up, and largely and influentially signed.

Meanwhile Martin, in the condemned cell, quietly awaited the fate for which he was daily preparing himself. The stern self-mastery, the strict discipline to which he had grown so accustomed during the last few years, the living in the constant expectation of a violent death from the hands of the mutineers, had in a measure familiarized him with the nearness of the last enemy; he was not afraid to die, but it was only natural that he should shrink from the ignominy of the death which awaited him; this, together with the thought of Kate, left alone and friendless in a hard, cruel world, weighed heavily on his spirits, and demanded the exercise of that faith in the all-wise goodness of his heavenly Father to which he had always endeavored to cling. Mr. Newberry visited him immediately after his return from London, and arranged to remain in Exeter to be with his friend to the last, though he still cherished hope against hope, and could not believe that God would allow a man whose whole career had been devoted to duty, and whose life had been spent in humble submission to the Divine will, to perish by a felon's death, through the machinations of his malicious enemies.

"I can't thank you enough, I shall never be able to repay you, for all the trouble you have taken about me, sir," said Martin, sadly, after he had heard from Mr. Newberry's lips of the ill success of his mission to London. "I can only pray God to reward you and bless you for all your kindness. It really seems as if I must give up all hope — only six days more now, sir. Ah! it is hard to die by such a death; my pride rebels against it, and I have a hard struggle to humble myself under the mighty hand of God."

"I can't imagine a greater trial, my dear friend," said the clergyman, "but He Who so far has upheld and supported you, giving you such sincere faith and firm confidence in

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Him, will preserve you to the end — He will never leave you nor forsake you, Martin. Dark and mysterious as His ways seem to us now, a day will come when we shall both understand them and acknowledge that all was for the best."

"Yes, sir, I am sure of that," said Martin, "and I feel certain, too, that after I am gone my innocence will be proved — if it come out no other way, some of those chaps who agreed to bear false witness against me will fall out about the plunder, or their consciences will trouble them till they confess the wrong they have done to an innocent man, even though it may be too late to make reparation."

"Simpson has already disappeared suspiciously, and is being watched by detectives," said Mr. Newberry; "if we could once prove that he was in possession of property that did not belong to him we should be able to use a strong argument in favor of obtaining a respite for you, Martin."

"Simpson has proved himself so clever and cunning through the whole business, sir, that he isn't likely to allow himself to be caught tripping now," replied Martin, sadly. "You must not indulge hope, sir. You, and Messrs. Willis & Dobbs and all my kind friends, have made every effort to save me, all to no avail; we must now be prepared for the worst."

"Well, Martin, it is best that we should be," replied Mr. Newberry, "but we need not give up all hope for that — much may happen in six days — I don't despair yet."

Martin was silent for a few moments.

"How did Kate seem when you saw her last, sir?" he then asked.

"I saw her yesterday, Martin; of course I could not say much to cheer her, but I did my best; she tries to keep quiet and resigned, but one can see from her face how her sorrow tells upon her. She has set her heart upon seeing you once more. Martin to take a last farewell." replied Mr. Newberry.

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"Poor dear girl! it's but natural we should both like to meet again once more; but I fear it'll be bad for her, sir; don't you think so?"

"Yes, Martin, but perhaps the disappointment of not seeing you would be worse."

"Well, sir, it's only for her sake I should refuse; for my part I long to see her once more and say 'Good-by!'"

"I've thought it over, Martin," said Mr. Newberry, "and I think it had better be; but we will defer it to the very last — in case it should not be necessary.

"Yes, sir, till the day before" ——

"That will be Monday, Martin. I will go and fetch her from Plymouth myself."

"Thank you, sir. How kind you are to us both; the Lord reward you!"

Grieved as he was, and utterly cast down at the apparent hopelessness of all the efforts made to save his friend, yet the good clergyman could not help being thankful, as he left the prison, for the firm faith and calm resignation with which the blessed Spirit had endowed him. He prayed that it might be continued to the last sad hour.

On the evening of the day which followed this interview between Mr. Newberry and the condemned skipper, Mr. Willis and the other members of the firm were sitting in the partners' room behind the office, where they had been joined by the Mayor of Plymouth and three influential gentlemen of the place, two of them magistrates, the other a clergymen. They had met there by appointment, to consult whether any means yet remained to be employed to save the life of Captain Archer. The hoped-for respite had not arrived; no communication, in fact, had been received from the Home Secretary. The partners were in despair; they had tried every possible expedient to obtain a delay in the execution of the sentence; they were at their wits' ends to know what to do next. It was terrible, heart-breaking, to think that an upright, brave, generous man, who had

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passed his whole life in their employ, in whom they had placed implicit confidence, should be sacrificed for his devotion to their service, and die a felon's death, because he courageously endeavored to quell a mutiny raised by a set of villains. They had forced the command of the "Queen of the West" on the captain against his will; only obedience to what he felt was the call of duty, and a desire to relieve them of a difficulty, had induced him to accept it. A heavy weight of responsibility fell therefore upon them; their action had been the cause which unwittingly had brought about the skipper's fate. They had indeed made every effort to save him, but without avail.

"What can we do?" said Mr. Willis, whose pale, careworn features proved the mental agony he was suffering. "Is there any expedient left — any means untried to save our good captain?"

"I can think of none," said the Mayor. "Our petitions have merely received the usual official acknowledgment, and I very much doubt whether any further notice will be taken of them."

"We had better telegraph to the Home Office to-morrow morning, to inquire the Secretary's decision to your request for a respite, Mr. Willis," said one of the magistrates.

"Yes, it can do no harm," replied Mr. Willis; "but I dare not indulge the hope of a favorable reply."

"I do not despair," remarked the clergyman. "I have observed that when respites are granted to the condemned they do not generally come till the day preceding that fixed for the execution."

"You are right there, Mr. Richardson," said the Mayor; "that is the rule, I believe."

"It seems a cruel and useless one," said Mr. Willis, sadly.

At that moment there was a knock at the door.

"Come in," said Mr. Willis.

The clerk Forster, who was on such friendly terms with

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Martin and Kate, came in hastily with an eager and excited manner and flushed face.

"A telegram, sir," he said; "and the postmaster, who brought it himself, because it was so important, says it comes from America, and"——

Before he could finish the sentence, Mr. Willis, who had torn open the envelope, exclaimed:—

"God be praised! This will save our captain's life."

"Read it, Mr. Willis!" they all cried with one voice.

But he was too much overcome to utter a word. He handed it to the Mayor, who was sitting next him, and who read as follows:—

"From Messrs. Thomson & Gibbs, New York, to Messrs. Willis & Dobbs, Plymouth.—Five men, survivors from 'Queen of the West,' wire us from Chicago, on their way to Europe, and will prove Captain Archer's innocence."

"Thank God!" said the clergyman, devoutly. "I never could bring myself to believe that such a good man would be allowed to die a felon's death."

"I shall just have time to catch the mail train for London," said Mr. Willis, who was beginning to recover his composure. "The Home Secretary cannot refuse me an interview now, and, of course, we shall get an unlimited reprieve."

"I will go with you," said the Mayor. "Two are better than one, and I am a more disinterested party."

"Thank you, Mr. Stone," said Mr. Willis. "I shall indeed be glad of your company and assistance."

"I will immediately telegraph to Mr. Newberry," said the clergyman. "The sooner he knows this good news, and can tell the poor captain, the better."

"Yes; lose no time," said Mr. Willis, "and ask him to meet the mail train at the Exeter station, and I will show him this blessed telegram."

The good news spread like wildfire through Plymouth, causing joy everywhere and removing a burden from many

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hearts who were grieving at the thought of the terrible fate impending over their innocent fellow-townsman. The clerk Forster, who had delivered the telegram to his employers, lost no time in hastening to communicate the happy tidings to Kate.

His unexpected appearance agitated her not a little. He must be a bearer of good tidings, for there was no worse news than the reality to tell. She had just come back from church, and was sitting, as was her wont, with a book in her hand, but thinking of Martin, for whom she had just been praying, when her friend, hot, flushed, and excited, entered the room.

"Cheer up, Kate!" he cried. "Good news, glorious news at last! We have just had a telegram from America. Five survivors from the 'Queen of the West' are on their way to Europe to prove Martin's innocence."

She could not speak for some time; tears of joy and thankfulness ran down her cheeks.

"I never could give up all hope," she said at last, "because God never forsakes His children, and I was sure He would hear the prayers which I and so many others have been offering for Martin during this sad, anxious time. But it is hard to realize that he is saved, the good news has come so unexpectedly. God be praised for it. The Lord indeed is nigh unto all those that call upon Him, yea, all such as call upon him faithfully."

"Martin will know the good news himself to-night, Kate," said the clerk. "Mr. Newberry has been telegraphed to at Exeter, and Mr. Willis, with the Mayor, started for London by the mail train to see the Home Secretary and get the reprieve."

"There's no doubt that it will be granted, I suppose, Forster?" asked Kate, anxiously.

"None whatever; with fresh evidence forthcoming to prove a prisoner's innocence a new trial will take place at once. But I must say good-night; I ran up here to tell

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you the good news before I had finished my work, and must be off."

"Good-night, Forster. I can't thank you enough for your kindness. Oh! what a weight of care you have taken from my mind," she said as she warmly shook his hand.

That same evening Martin was sitting in his cell in Exeter jail immersed in deep thought, his head buried in his hands. As the fatal day approached, he strove, by turning away his mind entirely from earthly things and fixing it on those above, to prepare himself for that dread change which every hour seemed more inevitable. Now and then that strong faith in God which had hitherto enabled him to bear up so bravely under such terrible trials seemed as if it would fail him. The tempter was on the watch for any moment of weakness in which to instil into his mind doubts as to God's care and love for His children; if there were any God at all, He was not able to protect the innocent or defend those who put their trust in Him; — what advantage had it been to him now that he had always striven to do his duty, and to live an honest, pure, and religious life? What reward had he for never being ashamed to confess his Divine Master, and for all the shame and suffering he had endured in His cause? The Lord had abandoned and forsaken him; He had given him over into the hands of his enemies; He had put out no hand to save him, but had suffered him to be tried and sentenced to the shameful death of a common felon, though he was completely guiltless of the crime with which he was charged. How could he reconcile this with God's mercy and justice? Such thoughts were filling his mind that evening. Never since he had been in prison had he felt so cast down, — so inclined to despair. He cried out in the bitterness of his soul: "Forsake me not, O Lord: O my God, be not far from me. Make haste to help me, O Lord, my salvation. That which I see not teach Thou me." Then the thought of his Saviour came into his mind; he remembered all that

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He had borne and suffered for him, how He had been falsely accused and condemned by His enemies, how He had endured a far more shameful death than that which was in store for him; he thought of the innocence and perfect holiness of the blessed Son of God, who had borne so meekly such cruel torments, insults, and a most ignominious death for him, a sinner; and should he repine and rebel, and no longer trust Him, because He called him to follow in His steps? No; at the foot of the Cross he found again submission to God's will, and strength to bear it. Gazing on his Saviour as He hung on that tree of agony he learned the truth of the words "That all things work together for good to those who love God." "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" A certainty took possession of his mind that the time would come when God would justify His ways, dark and mysterious as they now appeared, and that, taught by Him, he would himself acknowledge, in humble adoration, that "The Lord redeemeth the souls of His servants, and none of them that trust in Him shall be desolate," and "That our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."

He had risen from his knees calm and refreshed. He took out his hymn-book and read many of those favorite hymns — most of which he knew by heart — which he had sung when a choir-boy at St. Michael's Church, and whose cheering words had often solaced him during midnight watches on the stormy sea, or when confined in the close dungeon in the ship during his voyage home; he was slowly repeating the words, —

"Thy way, not mine, O Lord,
However dark it be.
Lead me by Thine own hand, —
Choose out the path for me.
Smooth let it be, or rough,
It will be still the best.
Winding or straight it leads
Right onward to Thy rest."

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He had just laid down the well-worn hymn-book from which, next to the Bible and Prayer-book, he had derived more comfort than from any other volume, when the door opened, and Mr. Newberry entered the cell. Martin started, for this visit was quite unexpected, and at a most unusual hour, while the clergyman's countenance wore a totally different aspect than it had latterly been wont to do. Something evidently of importance had occurred.

"Good evening, Martin," he said, cheerfully, "I bring you good news at last, for which the Lord be praised."

"Is it a respite, sir?" asked Martin, quietly.

"Better than that, my friend, — news that will certainly bring a reprieve. A telegram has come to Willis & Dobbs from America, sent by five of your mates who were cast adrift by Simpson, stating that they are on their way to Europe, and will prove your innocence."

Martin could not speak for a few moments; the good tidings had come so unexpectedly that he was quite overcome; he could hardly realize their truth.

"Though now and then I have almost felt inclined to despair," continued Mr. Newberry, "I felt sure that the Lord would never suffer the righteous to be forsaken, or the innocent to perish. Do you not feel, Martin, how true are the words, 'Therefore will the Lord wait that He may be gracious unto you; blessed are all they that wait for Him'? He has waited for the trial and confirmation of your faith, and shown the truth of His promise, 'The salvation of the righteous is of the Lord; He is their strength in the time of trouble. And the Lord shall help them and deliver them; He shall deliver them from the wicked, and save them, because they trust in Him.'"

"I am not worthy of this goodness, sir, for I was distrusting Him sadly, a short time ago; though, in answer to my prayers, my confidence in His mercy and loving-kindness had come back to me before you came in," said Martin, through the tears which flowed down his pale, weather-

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beaten cheeks. "Let us thank the Lord for His great goodness to me, sir, before we speak of anything else."

They knelt down in the cell, and Mr. Newberry offered up a fervent thanksgiving to the gracious Father in heaven, Who had heard their prayers, and delivered His servant out of the hand of his enemies.

"This will be good news for Kate, sir, will it not?" said Martin. "I hope some of our friends at Plymouth will let her know at once."

"I've no doubt Forster lost no time in telling her," said Mr. Newberry, "he takes so warm an interest in your case, Martin."

"And you'll see her yourself, sir, when you go back to Plymouth to-morrow, I hope."

"The first visit I make shall be to her. I meant to spend Sunday with you here, Martin, but now, thank God, there's no need of that, though you won't be released from jail till after a fresh trial. You've nothing to fear now; you may take courage and look cheerfully forward to the future."

"That I can, indeed, sir," said Martin. "Now, truly, too, I may say in the words of the Psalmist, 'I waited patiently for the Lord, and He inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my foot upon a rock, and established my goings. And He hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God.'"

"Good-night, Martin," said Mr. Newberry, as he rose to take leave; "God bless you. I shall go to Plymouth to-morrow by the first train, and let you know how Kate bears the good news."

When it was clearly proved to the Home Secretary that most important evidence in Martin's favor was on its way to Europe, in the persons of the five sailors who had been cast adrift by the mutineers but who Simpson and his confederates denied had ever sailed from Melbourne in the

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ship, the reprieve was granted immediately, and a telegram to that effect despatched to the governor of Exeter jail. Martin, before noon on Saturday, had been informed of the good news. He was removed from the condemned cell to more comfortable quarters.

When, that evening, Mr. Willis and the Mayor arrived at Plymouth, they found a telegram awaiting them from the London detective who had been set to watch Simpson. In this he informed them that he had traced the first mate of the "Queen of the West," who had been endeavoring to dispose of a gold nugget, which he stated he had himself picked up at the Australian gold-fields. As his conduct was suspicious, his answers unsatisfactory, and he had at the trial denied all knowledge of a certain nugget which the captain declared was left in his cabin, he had been arrested by the police, and would be brought to Plymouth next day. Here was fresh evidence in Martin's favor.

Some time must elapse before the second trial could take place, but all the witnesses who had given evidence against him were subpœnaed to appear. Meanwhile Simpson, charged with being in unlawful possession of property not his own, was kept in jail at Plymouth till the arrival of the five men from America.

Martin was now treated with great kindness and consideration by the prison authorities. He was indeed looked upon as an innocent man. Kate came to visit him, accompanied by Mr. Newberry, but under what different circumstances than they had both anticipated, only a few days before, when they had looked forward to it as a sad parting, the last time they should meet in this world!

Now all was changed. The dark cloud which had been hanging over them, threatening nothing but evil, was gradually dispersing. A bright and happy future might yet be in store for them.

Not only did Martin express his deep gratitude to the Almighty for the providential interposition by which his

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life had been spared, and his character was about to be vindicated, but also for having so mercifully watched over his five shipmates. Three, alas! he knew, must have fallen victims to the hardships to which they had been exposed. He often wondered who had been spared. He longed to see his friend Jack again, and prayed that he might be among the saved. He could scarcely indulge a hope of seeing poor Charley Barry again. The boy, he feared, was too young and weakly to endure long exposure in an open boat, as well as the hard life and many privations which must necessarily have been incurred. But he was sure that he was safe in the hands of his loving Father, Who, if He did not see fit to bring him back to his earthly home, had taken him to be with Him in the rest of Paradise.

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CHAPTER XXXIII.

ACQUITTED — CONCLUSION.

"With peaceful mind thy race of duty run;
God nothing does, or suffers to be done,
But what thou wouldst thyself if thou couldst see
Through all events of things as well as He."
— J. BYROM.

"Work your work betimes, and in His time He will give you your reward." — ECCLUS. li. 30.

IT was twelve days after the arrival of the telegram at Plymouth when five strong, hearty seafaring men stood on the deck of a large Atlantic steamer as she threaded her way among the various craft in the Mersey towards Liverpool. Their faces beamed with joy and thankfulness as they gazed on the shores of their native land, which, at one time, none of them had ever expected to see again. What perils they had passed through! what hardships they had suffered since sailing from Plymouth more than eighteen months ago! But it was not so much the thought of their own preservation which filled their hearts with happiness and gratitude to God at that moment as the assurance that their arrival would be the means of saving the life and clearing the character of their beloved skipper, Captain Archer, now lying in Exeter jail.

As the steamer cast her huge anchors in the river Jack gave way to the wildest demonstrations of joy.

"Here we are, mates," he cried, "in port at last in old England; in a few more hours we shall be at Plymouth and have our brave skipper out of prison."

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"Mustn't Simpson be trembling in his shoes?" said the boatswain.

"Ay, indeed," replied Jack, "and the whole lot of them ruffians too."

"It's to be hoped they've locked 'em up in jail," said Blake; "elseways they'll be off when they know we're on the road to tell the truth."

"Well, they're safe to be caught if they have made off," said the carpenter.

"There's one thing spoils my pleasure," said Jack; "it's to think how our skipper 'll take on when he hears about poor Charley — he was such a rare favorite of his; but I can tell him what a happy death he died, so peaceful-like and resigned."

"Yes," said Blake; "that boy was an example to us all. I learned a good bit from him."

The tender was now alongside the steamer, and the men hastened to get on board; in a few minutes they were on shore and making their way through the crowded streets to the railway station.

"Here's a telegraph office," said Jack; "let's wire 'em to say we've arrived safe."

"Yes, to be sure," said Blake, who at once telegraphed to Willis & Dobbs, informing them that they had landed at Liverpool and were on the point of starting for Plymouth.

Late that night the five men reached their destination. When they learned all the particulars of the trial, of the insults and ill-treatment to which their skipper had been subjected by the mutineers during the voyage home, of the false witness they had borne against him, of the bare-faced lie they had sworn to when they asserted that they had never cast the eight men adrift, declaring that they had never sailed from Melbourne, their indignation knew no bounds. A declaration was drawn up next day and signed by them all, giving the real facts of the case.

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Orders for a fresh trial were immediately issued by the Government.

One of Jack's first acts on reaching Plymouth was to visit Kate. He knew that she must be fretting sadly about Martin, and would rejoice to hear the true story of what had occurred during this ill-fated voyage from his lips. Jack was shocked when he saw how ill and care-worn she looked. But as in his plain, rough way he related, with all the enthusiasm of warm friendship and admiration, how nobly Martin had behaved, with what patience he had borne the insults of his cowardly crew, how loth he had been to punish till the safety of the ship and cargo forced him to take strong measures, how courageously he had withstood the mutineers notwithstanding their superiority in numbers, how the sternest necessity had obliged him, with the greatest reluctance, to take Dan M'Carthy's life; with what meekness and dignity combined he had after he was overcome borne the ill-usage, the blows and kicks of the wretched miscreants who formed his crew. In listening to all this her countenance brightened up through her tears; she took heart again; she felt that with all the testimony now in his favor Martin was indeed saved, his good name preserved, and his character thoroughly vindicated. It was not for him that she grieved now: it was the sad end of her unhappy brother that weighed so heavily on her heart.

When she learned from Jack that he had known Dan at the diggings she asked many questions about him; and though Jack, good-naturedly, tried to make the best of Dan and said nothing of the cowardly way in which he had betrayed and plotted to rob him, she did not gain much comfort from his words.

Then he told her all about the long, weary days and nights of suffering they had passed in the boat. When he mentioned the name of Charley Barry his voice became very hoarse and he wiped his eyes with his sleeve; he

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could scarcely get through the story of the poor lad's last hours.

"I'll beg of you as a favor, miss," he concluded, "that you'll go and see that poor boy's mother and break the bad news to her: it'll come softer-like from your lips than from a rough chap like me; but tell her, please, that her son died quite happy, trusting in the Lord Jesus, and praying to the last, and that the words that lad said to me when he was dying went so deep into my heart that I shall never forget them: he led me to turn to that Saviour Who had given him such strength and courage to meet death; and though I've been a greater sinner than most men I know that He died for me, and by God's grace I hope to love and serve Him now as long as I live. Here's his Testament, too, which he charged me to give to his mother."

"Yes, Jack," said Kate; "I'll undertake the sad task for you. Poor woman! I feel for her, indeed; but it'll be a comfort for her to know that he lived a Christian life and died a Christian death, and that by God's mercy his good example helped you to such a blessed change of heart and life."

Jack had another promise to fulfil at Plymouth, which was to go and see the widow of his shipmate Tom, who had also died in the boat. He would have liked to ask Kate to do this also for him, but he thought it would be too much to demand of her, so he performed the sad office himself to the best of his ability. The poor woman was prepared for it, for she had heard of the arrival of the five shipwrecked men at Plymouth, and that her husband was not among the number; she had, therefore, almost given him up for lost. Her worst fears were now confirmed, and her only consolation was Jack's assurance that the poor sailor had died happy and trusting in the merits of his Redeemer.

Next day Jack went to Exeter, and was allowed to see Martin in jail. Very warm and hearty was the meeting between the two friends, but Jack used such strong expres-

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sions of indignation, not only against Simpson and his rascally shipmates, but also with regard to the injustice of the skipper's imprisonment and sentence, that Martin had several times to check his hot and impetuous speech in the presence of the warders.

Martin was deeply interested in Jack's recital of the days of hardship and suffering passed in the boat, and quite overcome by the story of Charley's last hours, and of the touching message he had sent him through Jack; he thanked God with all his heart for the blessed influence which these sufferings and the example of the patient, heroic Christian boy had exercised upon Jack, whose conversion he felt no doubt was thoroughly sincere, so humble was he now and distrustful of himself, lest he should again fall into sin, and prove ungrateful to his Lord, Who had done so much for him.

Simpson was brought up before the magistrates a few days after the arrival of the shipwrecked men at Plymouth. He was accused of the double crime of theft and perjury. Jack swore to the nugget being his, which Captain Archer, as soon as his second trial was over, and he was released from jail, could prove. The five men next swore that he had encouraged a mutiny on board the "Queen of the West," of which Andrews and Johnson were the leaders, but by which he had profited more than any of the others, as he had been made captain of the ship, and that he had then cast them and three others adrift in an open boat, knowing that as they had espoused Captain Archer's cause they would prove inconvenient witnesses against him. Simpson, who looked haggard and desperate, denied these charges. The magistrates, after a long examination, committed him to trial on both.

No less than six of the other mutineers had succeeded in absconding as soon as they heard of the arrival of their late shipmates in Plymouth; the police, however, had their eyes on the rest, and plainly gave them to understand that not

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only must they appear to give evidence at Captain Archer's second trial, but that in all probability they would have to answer a serious charge themselves; moreover, as they were strictly watched all attempts at escape would be useless.

The weeks that had intervened between the respite and his second trial Martin passed in quiet hope and confidence. He knew now that all would be well. When everything had gone against him, and he was brought to the very brink of the grave, with the shameful death of a malefactor impending over him, he had not lost his faith in God; he had often cried out in the words of the Psalmist, "Judge me, O God, and plead my cause against an ungodly nation: O deliver me from the deceitful and unjust man. For Thou art the God of my strength: why dost Thou cast me off? why go I mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" His prayer had been heard even beyond his expectation. The Almighty had marvellously interposed to vindicate His servant and prove his innocence, and he could now say from his heart: "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise Him Who is the health of my countenance, and my God."

He was frequently visited by Mr. Newberry and Mr. Willis, as well as by Jack, Blake, and his other three shipmates.

When the day for the trial arrived, Martin had five witnesses in his favor, while those against him were reduced to seven. Simpson resolutely maintained his original story, but the other men when confronted with the second mate of the "Queen of the West" and the four seamen broke down utterly in their evidence, not only contradicting each other, but in cross-examination themselves as well. Sambo, whose testimony had been so lame and unsatisfactory at the first trial, now boldly told the whole truth; in fact he became an important witness in the skipper's favor.

When the witnesses for the defence were called, they all gave their evidence in the clearest and most straightfor-

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ward manner. They told of the insolence of the villains who composed the crew, of the patience and forbearance of the captain, of the outbreak of the mutiny; how Dan M'Carthy, a ringleader in it, would certainly have killed the skipper had he not fired first, how that resolute action terrified the scoundrels for a time, and probably saved the ship and their lives. Then they related the story of the second outbreak, how the captain had been overcome, shamefully treated, and imprisoned, and they cast adrift to perish in an open boat. Simpson's villany was made very plain by their testimony, and the further insults which Martin had received from him, when he was called on deck in the gale, and made to work as a common sailor, were now told by Sambo.

Strictly cross-examined by the counsel for the prosecution, none of them faltered or hesitated; there was no contradiction in the evidence they gave, it bore upon the face of it the stamp of truth.

Martin's counsel found little difficulty when for a second time he made an eloquent appeal to prove his innocence. The judge in summing up gave the jury to understand that there was no doubt in his mind as to the innocence of the skipper, who had barely escaped being the victim of as foul a conspiracy as had ever been hatched by a consummate set of villains.

The jury, not one of whom had the slightest hesitation as to the verdict they meant to give, by the voice of their foreman at once pronounced Captain Archer "*Not Guilty.*"

The judge then warmly congratulated him on his escape, expressed high admiration for the courageous manner in which he had acted in a trying and difficult emergency, told him that he was a credit to his profession, in which he wished him a long and prosperous career.

Amid the cheers and hearty hand-shakings of his friends

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and old shipmates Martin left the court a free man, and with an unblemished character.

As he was turning into Queen street, with Mr. Newberry on one side of him and Mr. Willis on the other, and followed by Blake, Jack, and a crowd of friendly sympathizers, they met a tall man in seaman's dress, whose pale features bore traces of recent severe illness. Martin started directly he perceived him, and exclaimed, —

"Robinson, is it you?" and immediately grasped his hand warmly; "this is a pleasure, indeed, to see you back in England, again."

"Yes, Martin, he replied; "I grew gradually better after you left, but it was slow work; as soon as I could leave the hospital I got a passage in a steamer to England, and only reached Plymouth last night. I had been longing for news of you ever since you sailed from Melbourne, knowing what a bad lot you had on board; so no sooner was I ashore than I went to Willis & Dobbs' office; there I learned all the story of the mutiny, and the sad events which had happened since we parted. I came on here at once to be present at the trial, feeling I couldn't wait at Plymouth to hear the result."

"Well, it's all right now, you see, Robinson," said Martin, "though it went very hard with me at first. I've often thought of you since I've been in prison, and wondered whether we should meet again in this world; and now, thank God, you've come back, though you still look pale and thin, mate."

"I'm better than I ever expected to be, though I can't expect to get up my strength all of a sudden after such a bad illness; but I hope I'll sail under you again some day, Captain Archer."

"So do I heartily," replied Martin.

All the men were glad to see Robinson again, and he received a warm welcome from his former shipmates. A

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happy and cheerful party returned by the next train to Plymouth.

In a couple of days' time, however, Martin, Blake, Jack, and the other three men had to return to Exeter to give evidence against Simpson and the other mutineers. Simpson had not only stolen Jack's nugget, but, as was now proved by Martin, a large sum of money which was in the captain's cabin as well. It is needless to enter into the details of this trial, which ended in the conviction of Simpson and his confederates for mutiny on the high seas, while Simpson was also found guilty of felony. He was sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude, his companions, among whom was Tozer, to shorter periods, according to the measure of their guilt, and the part they had taken in the mutiny.

Messrs. Willis & Dobbs did all in their power to compensate Martin for the trials and sufferings he had endured in their service. To their expressions of sympathy and warm appreciation of his heroic conduct, he replied that he had, God helping him, simply done his duty, as he trusted he always should do under similar circumstances. Nothing, he told them, and Mr. Newberry, too, could ever remove from his mind the deep sorrow which he must always feel that his old friend and shipmate, Dan M'Carthy, had perished by his hand. But it was inevitable, and could not have been otherwise. Whenever he was ready and disposed to go to sea again, Messrs. Willis & Dobbs offered him the command of any vessel in their fleet he liked to choose. He thanked them warmly for their kindness and confidence.

Martin's acquittal removed a heavy burden from Kate's mind. As long as he remained in prison under so grave a charge she could not repress a lingering feeling of anxiety. Now not only was he free, but his character was completely vindicated, too, and he came forth from the furnace of afflic-

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tion with a spotless reputation, and after the highest tribute had been paid to his honor and bravery. When they met for the first time after Martin's return from Exeter, he was pleased to see how much more herself Kate was looking than when he last saw her. Still both felt that the barrier betwixt them was not altogether removed; a dark shadow still threw its gloom over their future. Kate's deep mourning dress reminded Martin of the loss she had sustained. "Alas!" he groaned to himself, "that it should have been by my hand!"

Gradually, after many meetings, the old confidence seemed to be restored, and the young skipper made bold to ask Kate if, after what had occurred, she would consent to be his wife.

"You must give me time, Martin," she said. "I have not yet got over poor Dan's death. Don't for a moment think I hold you guilty; you did your duty, I know, and I am sure you never performed an action which cost you so much pain as taking my poor brother's life, but I can't quite get over the feeling that he fell by your hand. Forgive me, Martin, if I ask for time; it is not that I do not love you as much as I have ever done, but"—

"Say no more, Kate," said Martin, "I quite understand your feelings. I should hardly be surprised if, after what has happened, you refused to have me at all. You don't deny me all hope, do you?"

"No, no, Martin. Give me a year — six months; only, perhaps"——

"All right, Kate; your request is reasonable enough. I'll take another voyage, and when I come back, please God, perhaps you'll consent."

Ten months have elapsed. It is a brilliant May morning. Plymouth looks its best. The sparkling waters of the Sound are covered with shipping, many of them gayly decorated with flags. A wedding is to take place that day,

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and the bridegroom is a very popular young skipper, in the employ of Messrs. Willis & Dobbs. By his pluck, daring, and stern devotion to duty, as well as by his narrow escape from a foul plot against his life a year ago, his name had become quite famous in Plymouth, for every one spoke in the highest terms of Captain Martin Archer. The bells of St. Michael's were ringing a merry peal, and the church was filled by a large congregation, which consisted mostly of seamen. The bride, Kate M'Carthy, who had quite recovered her good looks, was accompanied, to the intense surprise of all who knew her, by her aunt, Miss Jennings, who insisted on giving her away. Notwithstanding her rooted aversion to the sterner sex in general, Martin's lifelong, constant love to her niece, his strict adherence to duty, his deference towards herself, and, more especially, his trials and misfortunes in the preceding year, had won her heart, and she now thoroughly consented to her niece becoming his wife. To both Kate and Martin it was a great relief that this long obstacle to their union was removed. Though Aunt Sarah grumbled occasionally at the prospect of losing Kate, she had made up her mind to the sacrifice, and would no longer stand in the way of the young people's happiness. To prove her sincerity, she not only determined to be present at the wedding, but, as Kate had no male relative living, to give her away herself.

Behind the handsome young skipper, bronzed with his recent voyage, and no longer bearing the haggard, careworn look he had worn after those months of suffering on his return from Melbourne, stood a stalwart, good-looking seaman, dressed in a new suit of clothes, evidently made for the occasion. His face was radiant with happiness. It is needless to say this was our old friend, Jack Adams, who, by steady conduct, giving his mind to the work of his profession, and by Martin's help, had got a mate's certificate,

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and on Captain Archer's next voyage was to accompany him in the capacity of second officer. The lesson he had learned from the dying lips of Charley Barry had never been forgotten by Jack, who had since lived a consistent Christian life, and become a regular communicant, when on shore, at St. Michael's Church. He was looking forward to his own wedding ere long, for the nugget had sold well; he had a comfortable sum in the bank, and had lately become engaged to a modest young girl, a friend of Kate's.

Robinson, Blake, and the three other men who had been turned adrift by Simpson, also occupied prominent positions in the church.

The service was choral, and was a very hearty one, several hymns being sung, in which the sailors present joined warmly. Mr. Newberry, of course, united in holy matrimony the two young people whom he had known, loved, and watched over as a spiritual father from their infancy. It was one of the happiest moments in his life. He could not conclude the service without saying a few words expressive of his good wishes to the newly-wedded pair, as well as of counsel and encouragement to those present. "Let them follow," he said, "the young skipper's example, and make duty their watchword throughout their career, yielding up their own wills to that of their heavenly Father, and He would care for and watch over them in as signal and gracious a manner as He had over Martin Archer, guiding them by His hand, and bringing them safely through as deep waters of affliction, and as heavy trials and perplexities, as the young captain had so heroically endured. When all seems lost, when the clouds that gather around us are the thickest, when no help seems at hand, and we feel that we must perish, then our God is often nearest to us and about to stretch out His hand to deliver us. Our extremity is His opportunity, as others there present beside the skipper had

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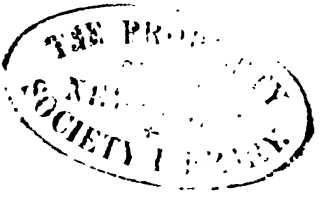
proved. Let them remember, therefore, the words of the Psalmist: 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace,' and think, too, of the hymn which says —

"'He always wins who sides with God,
To him no chance is lost;
God's will is sweetest to him when
It triumphs at his cost.

'Ill that He blesses is our good,
And unblest good is ill;
And all is right that seems most wrong
If it be His sweet will.'"



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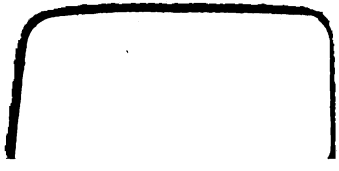

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